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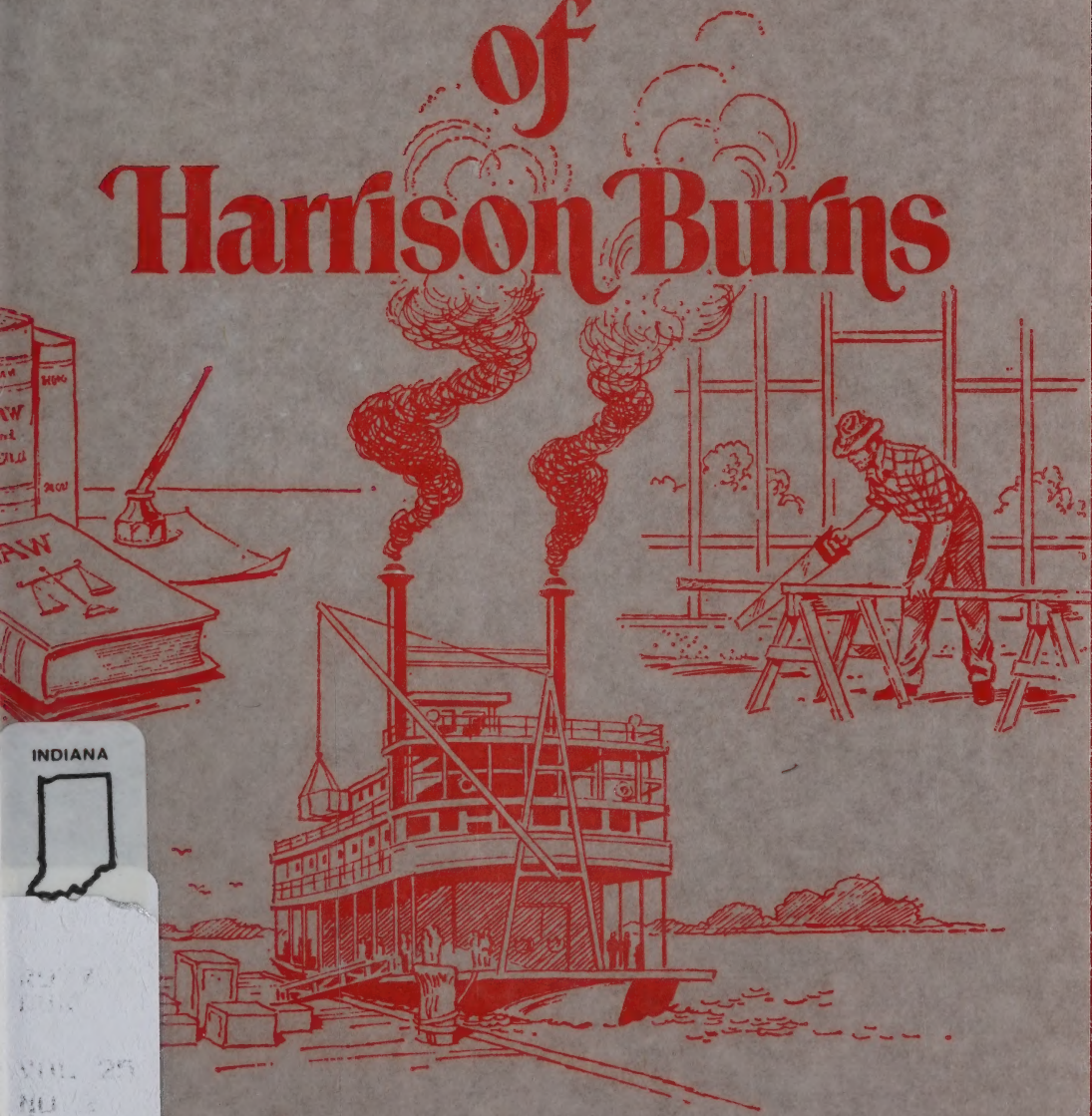

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INDIANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

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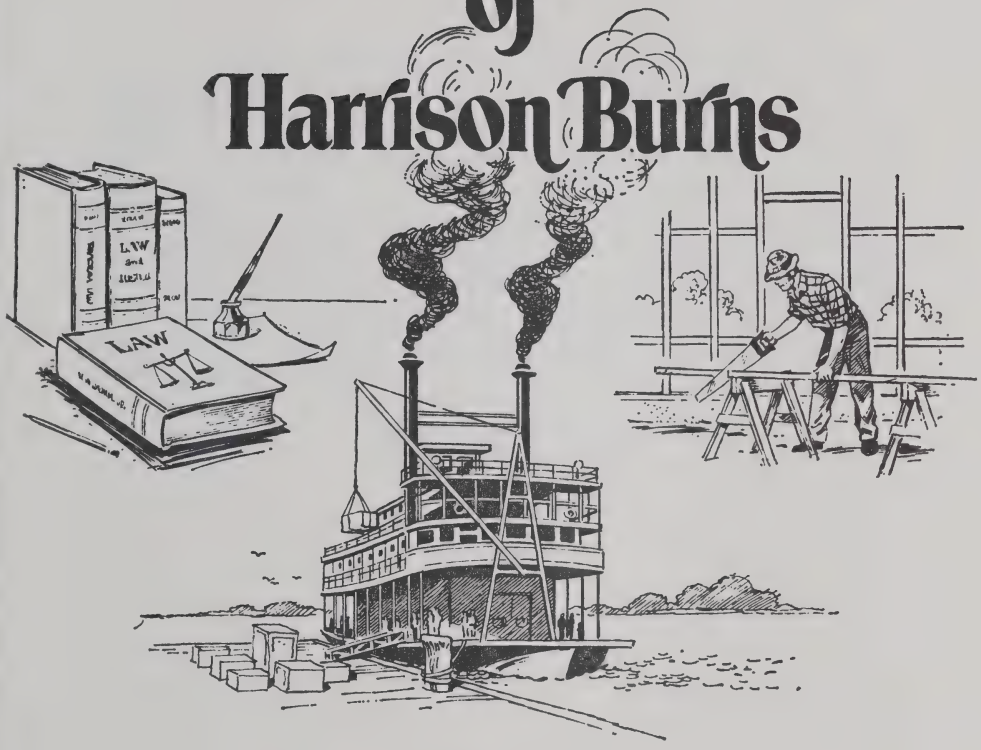
HARRISON BURNS IN 1869

Personal Recollections of Harrison Burns



as written in 1907

INDIANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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The name of Harrison Burns is well known, especially among members of the legal profession, for his compilations of Burns' Annotated Indiana Statutes, *but little has been known of the man himself and the adventures and accomplishments of his early years. Fortunately, in 1907 he recorded Recollections of his childhood and youth in Jefferson and Jennings counties, Indiana, and of his travels and employments as he sought to make his own way in the world before he settled down to the task of producing the works that "are quoted more often than those of any other Indiana author." The Recollections have been made available for publication by his grandson, David V. Burns.*

PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF HARRISON BURNS

KNOW but little of my ancestors on the side of my father, never having been able to trace any relationship back to the Scottish bard, Robert Burns, the investigation stopping with my grandfather, James Burns, and he and his descendants are the only relatives I have ever known bearing that name.

My grandfather was born in 1786 near Alexandria, Virginia. He moved from there to Kentucky in 1794, and in 1806 to Fort Washington on the Ohio River, which afterwards became the site of Cincinnati. My father, Maxa M. Burns, was born near that location in the year 1808 and died in 1890 at Indianapolis, Indiana.

Grandfather and his family, in company with two other families, came down the Ohio River in a flatboat in 1814 and landed at the present site of the city of Madison, Indiana. This was before the days of steamboats, and it required three days to make the trip. There were at that time some eight or ten families living at the present location of Madison. Grandfather afterwards moved and located six miles north of Madison at a place called Wirt.[1] I visited Madison when I

[1] For James Burns's recollections of his arrival in Madison and his early days in Jefferson County, see below pp. 78-83.

was not more than five years of age, and I then thought that it was a very great city and wondered how anyone could travel about the place without being lost.

Believing that but comparatively few persons of the present day (1907) who are not more than fifty years old know in detail how the majority of the inhabitants of the state of Indiana lived, and what were their habits and customs a half century ago, I, Harrison Burns, conclude to set down some of my early recollections on this subject.

I was born on December 11, 1836, in Jefferson County, Indiana, six miles north of Madison and near the little settlement called Wirt.[2]

I believe that I can remember some things that occurred when I was not over three or four years old. My father at that time had a sawmill at Wirt and I can remember visiting the mill before we moved from the log cabin in which I was born, the moving taking place when I was not more than four years old. This date I can fix because the next child (Livingston), who was about three years younger than myself, was then a babe in arms. We moved from this cabin to a plank house near my father's mill. One feature of that removal is still plainly impressed upon my mind, and that is that the moving was done with an ox cart and I can still see the cart loaded with goods, a feather bed on top, and my mother seated therein with the baby in her arms. I remember but few events of our life in the new house. It was there that my next younger brother, David, was born, and as he was four years and a half younger than I, I am enabled to approximate

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[2] Maxa Burns, Harrison's father, married Maria Vawter, daughter of William Vawter, on December 26, 1826. They became the parents of nine children: Jesse V., born 1830; James, 1831; William V., 1833; Harrison, 1836; Livingston, 1839; David V., 1841; Mary F., 1843; Elizabeth, 1844; and Sarah, 1846. Jesse lived only a year, dying in 1831; Livingston died in 1843.

my age in relation to certain prior and subsequent events.

When this brother was a young babe the plank house in which we lived burned. I remember this fire as plainly as I can call to mind any fire that has since occurred. My father and an older brother had gone to Madison with a load of lumber and my mother, with the youngest child, was visiting at a neighbors. It was a bright, warm afternoon, I think it must have been in September or October. My brother William, about three years my senior, and I were amusing ourselves outdoors after the manner of children, near the margin of a small stream that ran near the house. My older brother having occasion to go to the house, he opened the door and the flames burst out into his face. With intent to quench the fire, he grabbed a bucket and running to the creek, filled it with water and rushed back and dashed it on the roaring flames. The house being constructed of dry planks, burned like a tinder box and in less time than it takes to tell about it the building was entirely consumed. A few of the neighbors arrived on the scene about the time that the fire had reached its height but all that they could do was to rescue from the flames a few pieces of furniture.

I remember gazing upon the destruction of the house with the utmost unconcern, not realizing what it meant, and while I was wandering around I came upon my mother lying on the grass in a fence corner holding her baby and crying as if her heart were broken. My father and eldest brother did not learn of our misfortune until they returned from Madison after dark, when they found our home destroyed and our mother and her children scattered among the kind-hearted neighbors.

At this time there were five of us children, all boys, the youngest being a babe and the oldest about ten years old. The destruction of our home caused the separation of the family during the succeeding winter. Mother, with the two youngest children, went to her father's near Vernon, Indiana, while the

other children were distributed among the neighborhood relatives. I remember that I was located with a great uncle on my father's side, his children all being much older than myself. This uncle lived about a half mile from Wirt, which at that time consisted of a church, a log schoolhouse, a small store, a blacksmith and wagon shop, belonging to my father's father, and perhaps a half-dozen dwelling houses, mostly small. I remember going to school during the winter with the older boys, but I don't remember of learning anything, or trying to, and suppose I was sent only to get me out of the way.

Soon after the destruction of our house the neighbors joined in an effort to build a new one for my father. They cut and hauled the logs and erected the walls for a house much larger than the one that was burned, but before it was enclosed winter set in and it was never finished for us, but at a later date a brother of my father's completed it and he lived in it with his family for many years.

During the following winter word was sent to my father that the child next younger than I was sick with the scarlet fever at my grandfather's near Vernon, where my mother was staying. Father gathered us three boys together to take us to grandfather's. The Madison and Indianapolis Railroad at this time was in operation to a point a short distance north of Vernon and it ran within about a half mile of Wirt. It was intended that we should go to Vernon on the cars and as they passed north early in the morning, we started early to walk to the railroad. I remember that there was snow on the ground some four or five inches deep and crusted over with heavy sleet. I could walk on top of the sleet without breaking through. We reached the railroad and waited for the train but it did not come. When we concluded that it was not coming we went to the house of an uncle, who resided nearby, and remained overnight, and went to the railroad the next morning, but were again disappointed as to the coming of the train. Railroads in those days were not equipped for fighting

snow and this light snowfall obstructed the operation of the road for several days.

Father then procured a sleigh in which we were taken to Vernon, and there we met a conveyance sent to meet the train, by which we went to grandfather's. My brother lingered for some time with the fever and died, after which all our family returned to Wirt. This return trip was my first ride in a railroad car, but I do not remember the first time that I ever saw a railroad train. I distinctly remember this ride on the cars. After we entered the car it seemed to me that it soon began to shake for some cause but I had no idea that it was under way. It seemed to me that it was entirely closed and not being able to see out I finally inquired why the train did not start and I was told that we had started some time ago and that we were almost to our destination, as we had only about eighteen miles to travel.

After our return we lived in a small log house located in Wirt. I do not think it had more than one room, with a shed or lean-to or something at the back part. There was a large fireplace in the end where all the cooking was done, cooking stoves not yet having come into use. There were now four of us children in the family, all boys, which with father and mother made a family of six. Our house contained but little furniture, there being but one bedstead, which was used by our parents and the baby. A box was constructed of plank, having sides about six or eight inches high and this was placed on the floor at night in front of the fire and a bed made in it for us boys to sleep upon, and I remember that when we got in there was but little spare room and we could hardly turn over.

We lived in this house some two or three years, and notwithstanding we had but little room, I do not remember any great hardships or discomforts. I remember that we were living at this place during the political campaign of 1844, when the presidential candidates were Polk and Dallas and Clay and Frelinghuysen. My father being a Whig, of course I was of

that party also, which sometimes led me into trouble with a Polk boy. One occasion I remember very distinctly. A neighboring Polk boy and myself had occasion to go together to the same pasture, he for a horse and I to get our cow. We found a pokeberry patch which, of course, brought up the political controversies of the day and we began to berate each other with the stalks and berries. He had a bridle on his arm and as he became hard pressed he used the bridle across my face instead of a poke bush, and then ran. I carried home a skinned face to show the zeal I had for my party. I call to mind that there was a tree on the banks of the creek at Wirt which had the top broken off. A small quantity of earth had lodged in the place where the break had occurred and out of this earth a poke bush grew, which the Democrats asserted was a sure omen of the success of their party, and I suppose they always thought it was true.

My father was still engaged in the sawmill business. Such mills in those days were two stories high. The structural part was composed of heavy hewn timbers. The lower story was used for the furnace, boilers, engine, and other machinery. The upper portion was used for sawing lumber. What was called a sash saw was used, it being some five or six feet long and fastened into a frame, and when in operation went up and down rapidly and seemed to travel through the logs. The country was heavily timbered in those days and lumbermen had the choicest trees to select from. It was considerable of a job to get large logs up into the upper story of the mill. To do this an inclined way was built of heavy timbers over which a car ran. Upon it a log was securely fastened and the car was pulled up into the mill by means of a heavy chain attached to the car and a drum turned by steam power. A raised log-way was also built on the ground at the lower end of the car-way to facilitate the loading of logs on the car. Logs were put upon this log-way by being rolled up skids placed on the ground and on the log-way. In rolling logs up these skids it

was sometimes necessary to "chock" the log when part way up so as to readjust the chain around the log. One day my father was rolling logs up the skids, and no one else being near he told me to "chock" the log part way up, that is to put a block of wood on the skid behind the log. To do so I laid down on the ground behind the log and as I was about to place the block behind the log, the chain around it gave way and the log rolled back, passing over me. Fortunately the ground was soft so I was pressed into the earth and no damage was done except a very bad scare to my father and myself.

In those days oxen were used almost exclusively for heavy hauling. Father used them for hauling logs from the woods and for hauling the sawed lumber to Madison, which was his market almost exclusively. Doubtless there are buildings in that city today containing lumber sawed at my father's mill. My oldest brother James, from the time he was eleven or twelve years old, was engaged in hauling logs or lumber. He seemed to have a natural taste or genius for such work. He would start alone to the woods with a team of three or four yoke of oxen and return with an enormous log on the wagon, or he would be sent alone to Madison with a load of lumber.

At this period Madison was the principal town of the state. The only railroad in the state started from there, and it also enjoyed the benefit of river transportation. Many hogs were taken there to be slaughtered and packed. One of the principal highways leading north from Madison ran through Wirt. It was called the "State Road." In the fall of the year many fatted hogs were driven along this road to Madison to be slaughtered. Along the road for many miles north were many large houses, some five or six miles apart, which were called taverns, the owners of which made special arrangements for the accommodation of drovers with their droves of hogs. These droves on some days when they got as near Madison as Wirt would be almost continuous, there being scarcely a half

hour but that a drove would be passing along the road. The hogs would not travel more than five or six miles a day; the roads were often very muddy and the hogs fat and tired. I think many were driven to Madison from points as far north as Columbus. When the railroad was completed to that point then most of the hogs were shipped by rail.

In the early forties there did not seem to be many extremely poor people and no very rich ones in Jefferson County. The people in the country though not rich, yet had enough to live in comfort as the comforts of the day were considered. The houses of the farmers were reasonably large for the time and many of them were constructed of brick, while some were of hewn logs and others of unhewn or round logs. Frame houses were not usual, the reason being, I suppose, the absence of mills to saw the timber into lumber. I think that at this period Madison had more brick buildings than is usual at this day for towns of its size. The farms of that day were small as compared with farms of the present time. No large areas were in cultivation and I think but few farmers had many surplus products for sale, whatever was raised being mostly for home consumption.

In 1844 or 1845 my father moved his family to a farmhouse about a half mile north of the place called Wirt. This house contained four or five rooms and was quite commodious as compared with the one-room house that we had been living in. There were several acres in cultivation, quite a large orchard, and a good-sized barn. Our circumstances seemed to be improving because after we moved there we kept several cows and father bought a horse, or rather a roan mare, which was the first animal of the kind that was ever in the family so far as I know. This mare remained in the family for many years, being taken to Tipton County in 1855. Her name was Sal.

One Fourth of July, I think it must have been in 1845, our entire family took a trip to Madison, it being my first

recollection of the city, and it seemed to me an endless collection of houses and streets. My father had a brother living in the city and we visited the family. On our way home we took something with us that was quite a curiosity in the country in those days, a cast-iron cooking stove. I do not think any other person in our neighborhood had one at that time. It seemed to me that it took about a week to get the stove set up and in running order. Prior to this time all our cooking had been done at the fireplace. My brother next older than I and myself were made to help about the house as much as possible, and I remember that for a while it was a great privilege to be allowed to build a fire in the cook stove or clean out the ashes and soot.

While living at this place my youngest sister was born. From that date my mother was never well and she died there in December, 1846. Some months prior to her death, this sister, a young babe, and myself, were taken to my grandfather's, on my mother's side, who lived near Vernon in Jennings County, where I remained for more than two years and my sister lived there until she was nearly grown. On the death of my mother she was buried in the cemetery on her father's farm, beside two of her children, Jesse and Livingston. The death of my mother caused another separation of the family, the children being distributed mostly among relatives. There were seven of us, four boys and three girls; two boys and the three girls were taken by the relatives of my mother, while my two older brothers remained with my father in Jefferson County.

I now come to the point where I shall undertake to describe more fully the manner in which the ordinary country people lived at this period, and to detail some of their habits and customs.

The first settlers in the state do not seem to have selected

the best land so far as productiveness was concerned. Instead of locating their farms in the valleys and river bottoms, they selected hill lands, the soil of which was not as fertile as other lands. There were sufficient reasons for this, perhaps. My notion is that they desired healthy locations. The country was new and malaria was prevalent and they desired to get away from swampy or overflowed lands that produced miasma. Again water was something to be looked after, not only for domestic use, but to supply the thirst of their animals. I think the farm of my Grandfather Vawter was about an average one of that day, and I believe that his family was one that would be considered fairly well to do in his period of life. To describe his situation, the manner of his life and the joys, hardships, or pleasures of the members of his family from 1840 to 1860 would be to describe the general condition and habits of a large number of the inhabitants of the locality in which he lived.

The farm of my grandfather was located on a stream called Muscatatuck, some three miles north of Vernon, Jennings County, Indiana. The land was rolling and broken and the soil was thin. There was not a great amount of cleared land. He seemed to have bought in his early life a considerable quantity of land, for at the time I speak of he had conveyed some to his children who had married, and some of his other married children resided on the lands that he then owned. Of the land that he had under his direct control I do not believe that there were more than fifty acres in cultivation or used for pasture land. His dwelling was located on a high bank near the stream, and two springs near the house furnished water for domestic purposes. I presume these influenced the location of the house. A small stream which ran through the farm supplied water for domestic animals.

The dwelling house consisted of five rooms, and was a combination of brick, log, and frame, there being two rooms of brick, two of frame, and one of log, the last being the most

important room of the house. It was a very large room and during the greater part of the year it answered for a kitchen, dining room, and bedroom. In one end was a very large stone chimney, the fireplace of which would take in logs four feet or more in length. There was a large hearth composed of flat stones, and at this fire all the family cooking was done. There were skillets, ovens, and pots with which my grandmother produced some delicious dishes. In the winter time this room served also as the dining room, and there were in the room two beds which were sufficient for the use of the family when I resided with them. If company came, some other portions of the house were used. I can close my eyes now and go back in imagination to the time when the family would be gathered in that log room, before the great fireplace filled with bright, burning wood. There were not usually more than four of us. My grandmother was deaf and she did not take much part in the general conversation but she would sit and knit by the hour and apparently carried on an imaginary conversation with others, judging from the smiles that occasionally played over her countenance. My grandfather was a Baptist minister, and he usually devoted most of his evenings to reading books on religious subjects or the Bible. Once a week we got the Vernon *Banner,* which would break the monotony in reading matter. If I had no one near my age to talk with, I put in most of the evenings dozing and sleeping, and the evenings always concluded with family prayers, during which I often took another nap and then went to bed.

During the winter season it was no small job to build the fires in the large fireplace. About twice a week back logs were to be put in. These consisted of green logs about four feet long and ten or twelve inches in diameter. A large log was placed at the back of the fireplace and a somewhat smaller log placed on its top. Such logs were left there until they were somewhat more than half consumed, which would take several days, and then they were drawn forward and other

logs put in their places with the partially burned logs left in front. It took pulling and hauling and rolling to get these back logs into the house and into their places, as they were too heavy for any of our family to carry.

While the farm of my grandfather was not very productive, and there was not a large area in cultivation, yet there seemed to be enough produced to support his family, but I do not think there was any surplus for sale, unless it was cattle or horses.

There was usually a field of wheat, one of corn, a patch of buckwheat, perhaps some oats, and a small patch of flax. Then there was the garden which produced vegetables of various kinds and in considerable quantity. There was also meadow land from which hay was obtained, and quite a large orchard which produced apples in abundance.

Of stock on the farm there were several cows, a dozen or so of other cattle of various sizes, some horses, hogs, and a flock of sheep. There were two animals of the horse kind that deserve special mention. One was called Farmer and he was grandfather's saddle horse as well as a general purpose animal. The other was grandmother's riding animal, a mare called Bonny who, when I lived there, must have been as much as fifteen years old yet as gay and spry as a young colt, but always very gentle and docile with grandmother. It was very seldom that any one else rode her. This animal lived to be very old but was never broken to harness nor used in any manner except for riding. There were some younger horses and colts which I think were disposed of from time to time.

My grandfather did not have a vehicle of any kind to which horses were used, nor were such vehicles common in the neighborhood. He had a yoke of oxen and a cart and wagon with which all the hauling was done. The oxen were also used to do the heavy ploughing, and the horse, Farmer, was used to plough the corn. In my eleventh year I had my first experience in this kind of work.

There was quite a large barn on the farm besides some cribs, stables, and sheds. All the grain raised was stored in the barn and cribs and all the animals were kept under shelter during the winter. In the barn was a threshing floor upon which the wheat was threshed. The bundles of wheat would be placed on the floor in two circles, the heads of the wheat being thrown together, and then the wheat was tramped out by horses which were ridden around over it. This was usually done in the winter, and I remember being bundled into heavy clothes, put upon a horse, and while leading another I would ride around and around hour after hour thinking the journey would never come to an end. Sometimes this work would last for about a week, as some of the neighbors who did not have threshing floors would haul their wheat to be threshed to grandfather's barn, they helping him with his threshing for the use of the barn and help in their work. When the grain was all tramped out of the heads of the wheat, the straw would be removed and then the wheat and chaff put to one side, the barn floor again filled with bundles and the tramp, tramp all gone over again. This routine would be pursued until all of the wheat was threshed. After the wheat had been threshed then it had to be separated from the chaff, and this was done by running it through a fanning mill. This mill consisted of a large wheel upon which were wide boards or fans, and screens of different-sized meshes. The machinery was propelled by a cog wheel put in motion by hand power with a crank, the same as turning a grindstone. It was slow work as two persons working all day could clean only a few bushels.

I think grandfather sold very little, if any wheat. If he raised in one year more than enough for family use, it was usually kept over for some subsequent year when there might be a shortage. He had a wheat bin in his barn that I think was never entirely empty. The corn that was raised was shucked and put into cribs near the dwelling house. A special

white, flinty corn was raised to grind into meal and to use for hominy. All the meal and flour used was ground in mills that were not a great distance from the farm, from three to four miles, I think. They were run by water power. When breadstuffs were needed grandfather and I would take the wheat or corn, or maybe both, to a mill to be ground. If corn was to be taken, grandfather would select it in the daytime and at night it would be shelled in the kitchen and put in sacks ready for the morrow.

The wheat and corn was taken to the mill in sacks thrown across the horses' backs, the rider sitting on top of the sack. I always had a fear of falling over the horse's head when going down hill. When wheat was to be ground we had four different products to bring home–flour, shorts, middlings, and bran. The miller took a specified portion of each kind of grain to pay for the grinding. In this connection I call to mind an incident that occurred when I was about fifteen years old in connection with getting some corn ground into meal. I was then living with my father. It had been a very dry summer and all the streams were very low. An older brother and myself were sent one day to a place four or five miles distant to get some corn to make meal. Each of us had a horse and when we returned in the evening we had about two bushels of corn. The next day we were sent to a mill, some four or five miles away, with the corn to have it ground. When we got to the mill, we were informed that our grinding could not be done until sufficient water should collect above the dam to run the mill. We waited around until near sunset and were then told that there would not be water enough to do our grinding that day and that we would have to return the next day. We went home, returned to the mill the next day, and late in the afternoon our grinding was completed. We took the meal home, having spent three days with two horses to get about two bushels of meal.

Almost everything required for the use and support of

the family of my grandfather was raised or produced on his farm; all vegetables and fruits were so obtained. Some vegetables and fruits were stored in the cellar, but the principal portion was "holed" up as it was called. Piles of potatoes, cabbage, turnips, and apples would be made in the garden, over which would be thrown straw or hay and then dirt would be thrown over the pile until it was covered some eight or ten inches which would be sufficient to keep the contents from freezing. When it was necessary to obtain any of the contents of a pile for use, a hole was made at the lower edge and enough earth removed to enable a person to reach in and pull out whatever was needed. Straw was then stuffed into the hole and whenever more of the contents from that pile were needed it was easy of access. This was the manner in which vegetables and apples were kept until all danger of freezing was over in the spring, when the mounds would be opened and the contents removed to other places. Vegetables and apples kept in this manner seemed to be fresher and to retain more of their juices than when stored above ground. In those days there was no such thing as canning fruits or vegetables.

As to meats, my grandfather usually fattened some twelve or fifteen hogs, which were slaughtered in the fall or early winter and the different portions preserved or cured. The hams and shoulders were smoked with hickory wood in a smoke house, the sides were made into pickled pork or salted down, sausage was made of the lean portions and put away in different manners, while the fat was made into lard. It was very seldom that the people in the country had any fresh beef. Once in a great while some one in the neighborhood would kill a small beef which would be divided among the neighbors for immediate use as there was no way of preserving it fresh in warm weather. The pork that had been put up and chickens furnished the bulk of the summer meat.

There was an abundance of apples in the orchard of my grandfather. We gathered and stored away a considerable

quantity, and we made several barrels of cider, some of which was used with apples to make apple butter. They boiled some of the cider and put it away for future use, the boiling having a tendency to preserve it. Then a quantity of apples were pared and dried on a furnace prepared for the purpose. I remember an amusing adventure I had trying to sell some apples. Many apples were on the orchard ground and grandfather told me I could take some to Vernon and sell them if I wished. I gathered several bushels, put them in the cart, and taking the oxen drove to town with extraordinary visions of the money that I would have on my return. When I arrived in town I drove around the streets during the greater part of the day but I did not succeed in making a single sale. Before starting home I drove to the house of an uncle who lived in the town and generously presented them with a bushel. Then I drove home with my apples, and when I got there I stopped on the bank of the creek, took the tail gate out of the cart, and let the apples roll down the bank into the water. I never did know why I hauled those apples back home.

I had another and more successful speculation with apples. One year, after grandfather had gathered all the apples that he wished, there was quite a quantity left on the trees so he said that I could gather and put away some to sell during the winter or spring. I gathered several bushels of the best apples left and stored them away in the barn under the hay. Late in the winter I took a bushel to town on a horse, and on going to the store of my uncle and a son of grandfather's, he promptly and to my surprise gave me a quarter for my sack of apples and I returned home very much elated. I think I realized about seventy-five cents from my stock of apples, which seemed to me quite a sum.

Most of the ordinary clothing for the family was made at home, as well as the material for the same. My grandfather being a minister, his best suits were, of course, purchased, and also some of grandmother's best dresses, bonnets, and caps.

The sheep furnished wool, and when they were sheared in the spring the wool was washed, then picked and carded and taken to the woolen mill to be made into rolls. When returned it was spun into yarn, and this was dyed and then woven into cloth by my grandmother. She made jean which she made into clothes for the men folks of the family, and she wove other cloth which she used for her own clothing. Flax was raised on the farm. This was first run through what was called a brake, then it was hackled until the fine threads only were left, then these were spun and finally woven into cloth for tablecloths, towels, and bed linen. Woolen blankets and coverlids were also woven for the beds.

One of the principal articles of food for the winter was hominy. It was made from the flinty, white corn used for meal. We usually spent one evening shelling the corn and then one or two more evenings in beating or pounding it to remove the husks and cores. It was beaten in a wooden mortar made out of a log. This was made by taking a gum log some sixteen or eighteen inches in diameter and after sawing a piece about four feet long one end was hollowed out in the shape of a mortar, larger at the top than at the bottom, by burning and cutting until it was of the desired depth and shape. An ordinary-sized mortar would hold nearly half a bushel of shelled corn. The pestle was made by inserting an iron wedge into the split end of a piece of wood something like a pump handle, the wedge being held tight by iron rings forced down over the part holding the wedge. After putting the corn into the mortar a little water was thrown over it and then it was beaten with the pestle, gently at first, until the husks began to loosen and then with more force. After several hours of pounding the husks and hearts would be loosened from the grains and but few of the grains would be broken. When the beating was over, the husks and hearts would be separated from the grains by putting the mass in a wooden tray and tossing it up and down in such a way as to

cause the husks and hearts to fall over the edge of the tray. When this was done the grains would be put in a large iron pot and hung on a crane over the kitchen fire, water being added, and boiled at least one entire day and perhaps more. A few hours before it was done a few white beans would be added to give it a flavor. The pot would be set away with the hominy and as needed the hominy would be taken out and fried in fresh, sweet lard. It had a taste and flavor that I have never found in that article of food from that time to this.

Another article of food prepared for winter use was dried pumpkin. Large pumpkins would be taken and cut into strips, peeled, and tied in bunches and then hung up to the ceiling where heat would cure and dry them. By soaking in water they could be used in the winter for making pies. My grandfather always had several milch cows, and beside the butter used by the family a considerable amount was also made for sale in Vernon. He also had quite a large number of chickens from which many eggs were obtained, and in the laying season a considerable number of eggs were sold. I think that the receipts from butter and eggs sold paid for most, if not all, of the tea and coffee that was used. It was not unusual for him to engage his butter for a considerable time at five cents per pound and eggs at three cents a dozen. I can remember being started off before sunup on summer mornings on a horse with a bucket of butter and a basket of eggs for Vernon in order that I might get there before the heat would melt the butter. I do not remember ever receiving any pay for what I took to market, it being generally taken to my uncle's store from which I took home whatever my grandmother told me to get in exchange.

There was a sugar camp or orchard on my grandfather's farm and every spring sugar and syrup were made. Most of the sugar used in the family was maple sugar, and we never had any other kind of syrup. They would take maple sugar to town and exchange it for what we called "store" sugar, it

being a dark brown sugar made from cane, which I think sold at a higher price than the maple sugar. There was no inducement then to adulterate the maple sugar by adding cane sugar to it, and no pure food laws were necessary to protect the ignorant and innocent consumers.

It must not be presumed that the early settlers had all work and no play or amusements. While they knew nothing about theaters or circuses, and had no skating rinks or base- and football, yet they had their social meetings where they met and exchanged their various views upon different subjects, but at most of these gatherings the prime object was to get some useful work performed. They had wood choppings and quiltings, barn or house raisings, and wool pickings, as well as apple cuttings. At these times all the men in the neighborhood would gather at the home of a neighbor and assist him either in cutting his winter firewood or in raising a house or barn, which was usually made of logs that had been previously cut and hauled to the place selected for the location of the building. While the men were engaged in this work their wives and daughters were at the neighbor's house assisting his good wife in making a quilt or picking the wool that had been sheared from the backs of the sheep, and also in preparing a sumptuous repast for the men and others assembled. Not infrequently the work would last until supper time and the young folks would then wend their way homeward by starlight or moonlight, and no doubt many a love tale was told while hunting the pathway through the woods. At these gatherings the persons assembled would have an opportunity to exchange items of news, discuss births, deaths, marriages, and the prospects thereof. They had no daily papers to impart such information, the only messenger of that kind being the county weekly paper and it did not contain any personal news from the different localities.

There were other times and occasions when the neighbors would meet to assist each other. One was at hog killing,

when a neighbor would wish to slaughter his hogs for the supply of winter meat, or for that matter the meat of any kind that he would use for the next year. At such times there would not be so many attend, there usually not being more than three or four of the male relatives or most intimate friends. The men folks would kill, scald, clean, and dress the hogs, while the women folks would look after the sausage meat and lard. The average number of hogs killed would be from ten to fifteen. After they had been dressed and left out during a cool, frosty night to cool, they would be cut up, some portions salted away to be afterwards smoked and kept for the next summer's use, and other portions made into bacon or pickled pork. Sausage was prepared for both immediate and future use. Some was put up in shucks and stored where it would keep cool. It would dry and be quite palatable for months. The taking care of and curing the meat, the rendering of lard and other work following the "hog killing" would provide work for the family for several weeks.

These early pioneers knew and understood fully the advantage, as well as the necessity, of co-operation and if there was no combination of capital such as in these later days are called "trusts," there was a combination of labor, energy, and good wishes, and it was the only way in which their projects could be carried out, for there were no contractors who would undertake to perform a work of any magnitude and supply all the men and power necessary.

In addition to the social gatherings above mentioned, every person physically able was expected to attend church on Sunday if there was any within three or four miles. Many walked that distance, and then there were prayer meetings at some private house on one evening during the week.

The school privileges in those days were very meager. At the present time, when there is so much money expended in building handsome school buildings and so many theories advanced as to heating and ventilation, I often wish I could pre-

sent to the view of the carpers and faultfinders some of the schoolhouses to which I went to school in my early days, and could make the pupils of the present day understand what a thorny road their forefathers and foremothers had to travel to obtain the little book learning that they acquired.

When I lived at my grandfather's I attended school at two different houses, but they were both built after the same pattern. One was about a mile from our house and the other was about two miles away, and it seemed that in the winter time school was at the house farthest away.

These schoolhouses were built of logs, and the cracks or spaces between the logs were filled with mud. There was one door and one window. The latter was in one end of the house, long and narrow so as to extend nearly across the entire end, and under it was the one place for the scholars to do their writing. This place was made by a broad board being fastened upon pegs inserted into holes bored into the logs in such a manner as to make the board slant towards the room. The seats were made out of slabs split from logs with pins inserted for legs, and only those that were set next to the walls of the house had any backs, and for these the walls answered this purpose. In one end of the house was a huge fireplace, with a chimney built of sticks and mud. The heat was furnished for the house from this fireplace. The mud used in the chimney was red clay, and I think that the clay eaters of North Carolina must have been raised in houses with such chimneys and that from this fact grew the habit of eating clay, for I have a distinct remembrance that the dried clay from about the schoolhouse chimney had rather a pleasant taste.

There were no janitors to build fires and to keep the schoolhouses clean in those days. These tasks devolved upon the larger male scholars, some two or more being selected for a given time to build the fires and sweep out the house. The wood was generally green and was hauled to the house in long limbs or logs and had to be cut by the fire builders. It was

left out in the rain and snow and was, of course, not in first-class condition for building a quick fire, and quite often the wood ran short. Then the boys had to go into the woods and fell a tree or tackle one already down. The fire-building boys would of necessity have to be at the schoolhouse by daylight, for it was expected in those days that school would begin at eight o'clock and it lasted until five o'clock in the evening. If the boys who built fires lived some distance from the school, they had to hustle out quite early of a morning to get a fire started on time. As a general thing the boys prepared the wood for the morning fire the evening before and took it into the house where it would keep dry. What would some of our high school lads of the present day think of having to pursue such duties to obtain a little learning? I remember getting up cold, winter mornings and going to the barn in the dark to feed the animals, and then eating breakfast and starting for school just at daybreak. The road was almost entirely through the woods and during a great portion of the time there was snow on the ground.

The summer school days were more pleasant. There were no fires to build nor wood to cut and the walks to and from school were mere pleasure trips. Most all the scholars took their dinners to school, and at the noon hour all went to the woods near a spring to eat, and then spent the remaining portion of the time in playing and swinging. The summer schools were taught by women and their discipline was not so strict as that of the men teachers in the winter. Schoolteachers in those days boarded "around" among the scholars, or rather with their parents, their board being donated as part of their pay, each school patron being expected to furnish his share of the board.

At this point I am reminded of the great change in public sentiment since the latter part of the forties and the early part of the fifties and the present time (1907) as to the use of intoxicating liquors. In my boyhood days there was no ban and

but little restraint placed upon the use of liquor. It was no uncommon occurrence for the church members to keep it constantly on hand for use in their families. I remember a great uncle of mine, at whose home I spent a winter after our house burned, who kept a keg of whiskey in his house and he regularly took a dram before each meal. He had several boys and they had free access to the keg but I never knew of their touching a drop. This uncle was a member of the Baptist church, but whether of the thirty-six gallon variety or not I am not advised.

It was almost a universal custom to have a jug of liquor at all public gatherings such as log rollings, house and barn raisings, etc. And during harvest it seemed to be an almost indispensable article. Just why, in hot weather, when the blood was already at fever heat, it seemed necessary to have an additional heating stimulant, is one of the mysteries that may be called unsolvable. At election times whiskey was freely supplied by candidates. It was about as cheap in those days as kerosene oil is now, 12 1/2 to 15 cents per gallon. There were but few places in the country at that time where liquors were kept for sale, and there were no tippling shops in the small towns.

One time when I was about thirteen years old my father had some work going on, harvesting, I think, and he sent me with a quart bottle to a neighbor who kept whiskey for sale to get the bottle filled. On my way home I remember that the sun was shining bright and hot and when I would shake the bottle and hold it between myself and the sun the beads on the whiskey would shine and sparkle. I thought it looked very good and so I tasted it several times and by the time I got home my head was in a swim. Yet I don't suppose that I drank more than a tablespoonful.

In the spring of 1850, my father having remarried, he

took all of us children to his home except my oldest brother, James, who continued to make his home about Wirt, and my youngest sister, Sarah J., who, as before stated, remained at Grandfather Vawter's until she was nearly grown. At this time my father lived at Dupont, a village in Jefferson County, fourteen miles north of Madison on the Madison and Indianapolis Railroad. He was engaged mostly in carpenter work. He had a team of horses, one of them being the mare "Sal" before spoken of. I was then fourteen and was put to any kind of work that I could do. Having a natural inclination to work with tools, I devoted much of my time to making small articles. I remember making cradles for my sister's dolls. My brother William, some three years older than myself, was employed in doing general hauling with the team of my father's, and I often went with him to assist in loading and unloading. This brother was not pleased with our new home and in less than a year he went off to seek his fortune in other places and never afterwards resided with the family.

After my brother left the care of the team and its use fell to my lot. For about a year I was engaged in doing general hauling. I hauled wood, lumber, stone, sand, and anything that was to be carried from one place to another, which I could handle. I engaged in this work for about a year and I call to mind some interesting incidents. One of the team, a sorrel mare (not "Sal"), was given to balking, and about once a week she would take a notion to stop and rest. Sometimes after lampooning and "blessing" her for about an hour she would conclude to go ahead; at other times I would have to unhitch and ride home on horseback and return later for the wagon. Once I went to Madison to get a load of coal and when I was about three miles from home on my return, night came on. When I was about halfway up a long, steep hill the sorrel mare let go and the wagon backed down and down, and I was not able to keep it in the road; it ran off to one side into the woods and towards a deep hollow and a bluff

bank. As luck would have it, just before reaching the bank the hind wheels of the wagon struck a log and stopped. It was so dark that I could not see my surroundings or danger and there was nothing left for me to do except to unhitch and go home on horseback, where I arrived about ten o'clock. The next morning I returned to the wagon with the team, and when they were hitched they pulled the load up the hill and on home without a halt.

The first winter that I spent at Dupont I attended school. The schoolhouse was of brick and was quite modern compared with the log houses where I first began to seek learning. Yet the brick house was anything but comfortable or healthy. It was heated by a large stove, was crowded with pupils, and there was never any thought of opening a door or window for ventilation. The scholars were usually either freezing or sweating. Those nearest the stove would bake and burn but they had to grin and bear it. It can be truly said that what learning we acquired was obtained under difficulties.

My life continued under these circumstances until December, 1851, when I longed for other scenes and broader fields in which to develop my growing anticipations of a brilliant career. I was acquainted with a man in Dupont, a carpenter, who was in the habit of going to Louisville, Kentucky, in the winter and working in a pork house. He was what they called a ham trimmer and got very good wages. I suggested that he let me go with him and obtain work in the same house in which he worked. He consented, and as I knew my father would not consent to my going if I asked him, I waived the formality of making the request. It was arranged with my friend that we should meet at Madison and go to Louisville by boat. So one frosty morning before the break of day I slipped quietly out of the house with a small bundle of clothing and turned my steps along the railroad towards Madison. My friend was to follow on the cars. I reached Madison, fourteen miles distant, in the forenoon; he arrived

on the train about noon; we went aboard the *Blue Wing,* the Louisville packet, and the next morning I awoke in Kentucky, it being the first time that I had ever been out of my native state. I do not think I had a cent in my pocket on leaving home, my friend paying my expenses to Louisville. We went to board with a family of his acquaintance with whom he had boarded during former winters. I might say that this was the beginning with me of life on my own responsibility. I had never before been among strangers, nor had I ever done any work on my own account or received what I earned.

My friend secured work for me in the pork house, but my wages amounted to only about $3.00 per week. The good friends of my friend very considerately boarded me for $1.50 per week. In this family there was a girl who was exactly my own age, both of us having been born on December 11, 1836, also the anniversary of the birth of her mother. So on the day that the girl and I were fifteen years old we had quite a family jollification. While we were the same age in years, I can see now that there was in fact a great difference in our ages practically, for while she was in effect a woman, I was only a green unsophisticated boy with no idea of what life was like.

Work continued in the pork house until about February, when my friend left for his home, leaving me with the family and without anything to do to earn a cent. In the same house lived a widowed sister of the mother of the girl I have spoken of and also a younger sister of the widow and their mother. They were very kind to me and no doubt seeing my helpless condition gave me a home in consideration of my helping them by sawing wood and doing other chores until I could find something else to do.

During the winter the Ohio was frozen over and remained so for about two months. There was a well-beaten roadway on the ice between Louisville and Jeffersonville over which teams passed heavily loaded. On Sundays there were large

numbers of people on the ice, and several tents were put up at which refreshments were dispensed. The people continued to go on the ice until the weather got so warm that pools of water were formed on the surface. After the ice broke up there was high water. The steamboat *Eclipse* made its first trip and came over the falls to the Louisville wharf. This boat is said to have been the finest ever floated upon western waters. It is said that the boat cost $175,000. It was certainly a fine boat. A landscape was painted on the door panels of each state room. It is also stated that the *Eclipse* was the fastest boat that ever ploughed the waters of the Ohio or Mississippi rivers. There has for many years been a controversy between river men as to whether the *Eclipse* or the *A. L. Shotwell* made the trip between New Orleans and Louisville in the shortest time.

The *Eclipse* was built at New Albany shipyards, and when the boat had made its trial trip for speed and had the best record between New Orleans and Louisville, some competitors caused the *Shotwell* to be built with the avowed purpose of making better time between the two cities than the *Eclipse* had made. There was but an hour or so between the time claimed by the friends of each of the boats, and owing to some matters in controversy I do not know that the dispute was ever settled. For several years after the boats had made their race against time, there might be seen along the banks of the Mississippi and Ohio rivers at different points, signs or bulletins on which was stated the time made by the different boats from New Orleans to that particular point. In those days steamboats had but very little competition from railroads. But the railroads in after years practically destroyed the river traffic.

This now brings me up to the spring of 1852. I think it was in the month of March of that year that I concluded that I was cut out for a butcher. I thought it would be fine to stand in the market and sell meats and to go tearing along the streets

in a butcher's wagon, as I saw some men and boys doing. Through the influence of a butcher friend of my friends, I was made known to another butcher, who said he would take an apprentice. I went to him at his stall in the market and helped him there until the market closed and then went home with him on his wagon. After dinner he gave me the job of digging a ditch in his slaughter house lot. This and other like work, together with sawing wood, occupied my time. The butcher would be up early in the morning and off to market and would not return until afternoon, and it fell to my lot to get up each morning and build a fire in the kitchen stove for the good housewife. The family consisted only of the master and the wife. I think I went there on Monday, and on Saturday morning I built a fire in the cooking stove as usual and then went out about the premises to do other chores. When I returned to the house I found Mrs. Butcher about as hot as a cooking stove ought to be when ready for use. It seems that she had had a pan of biscuits some place about the stove, covered with a towel, and that the stove had got so hot that the towel was burned. She made things so hot for me that I did not relish my breakfast and then and there concluded that a butcher's life was not so bright as it had been painted, so between breakfast and dinner time I bade farewell to the premises without saying goodbye to anyone, and thus ended my career as a butcher of animals. The only meat that I had been allowed to cut was that set before me at mealtime. I never afterwards saw the butcher or his wife, and if I ever knew their name I have forgotten what it was.

In a short time after my graduation as a butcher I was employed by a carpenter by the name of Story. I shall always remember Mr. Story and his wife with pleasure. They treated me as if I might be a relative and seemed to take an interest in my welfare, but I can see now that I did not appreciate their kindness. My work there was much more to my liking than butchering, as I had previously had some experience in that

line of work. Mr. Story had several apprentices who were learning the trade, and he also employed several carpenters. Another apprentice and myself boarded and lived with our employer, and while Mr. and Mrs. Story were church members, Catholics, they tried to furnish us young people amusements of evenings by playing cards and other games. I was at their house at Easter, and I remember we looked forward to that day with some anxiety as our meat diet had been rather slim during Lent. Two things still remind me of my carpentering experience with Mr. Story. One is that I chipped quite a piece off of one of my fingers with a plane, and the other is the sinking of a chisel into my knee, which caused me to walk stiff-legged for some time. I have the scars yet to show for my clumsiness and poor workmanship.

I think it was while I was laid off with my stiff leg that I began to long for a change and for new scenes. At any rate in the month of June I wandered down to the wharf and on going aboard of the steamer *Belle Key* [?] I was offered the position of fourth cook, which I accepted and was soon afterwards on my way to New Orleans, this being my first river trip of any extent. I was called fourth cook but I did not come any nearer being a cook than I did being a butcher when I went to learn that business. My duties on the boat consisted of grinding coffee, peeling potatoes, cleaning fish, washing dishes, pans and pots, and such like fancy work. But then it was something new and I was seeing new sights and places all the time. A visit to New Orleans at that time was something to talk about. It was one of the noted places of the country. To see the miles and miles of steamboats and seagoing vessels along the river front was a sight long to be remembered. Most, if not all, of the sea craft were sailing vessels at that time, and they had to be brought from the mouth of the Mississippi to New Orleans by tugs. It looked queer to see a little bit of a boat march up the river with two large vessels in tow.

I remember that when at New Orleans on this trip the customhouse was being built, and a short distance away it looked like a huge frame structure. The building was constructed of stone, but there was a scaffold on the outside made of timbers some eight or ten inches square and all the material was placed on and the work done from this scaffold—a very different method from that of the present day. On the return of the *Belle Key* to Louisville I concluded I had done enough steamboat cooking, and I sent in my resignation, drew my pay, and sought out my old-time friends.

Ever since this first river trip water courses and boats have had a great fascination for me and I have wished during all my subsequent life that it might fall to my lot to have my home located upon a river or large body of water where vessels were passing at frequent intervals. I have often thought that if by any streak of luck, or otherwise, that I should become possessed of a goodly sum of money, I would buy a river steamer; one of those light, easily moving vessels that glide upon the water like a swan. I think that I should be content to make my home upon such a vessel.

Upon my return to Louisville, I had a letter from my brother James, who had located a short distance below Cannelton, Indiana, which is 120 miles by river below Louisville, his particular location being a very short distance above the present town of Tell City. He was at his old-time business of running a sawmill and he wished me to go down and help him. Having nothing to do and being anxious to try something new I accepted his offer. When I found him he was at the house of the owner of the mill, a Mr. [Henry P.] Brazee, a rather influential man of that section of the country. The mill and dwelling house were both situated on the bank of the Ohio River. I went to work at once, my duties being to keep a fire under the boilers, look after the engine, start and stop the

mill, help get the logs which were brought on the river in rafts up to the mill, clean away sawdust, and do any other thing that was to be done. As it was summertime it was not what might be called a cool job. We boarded with Mr. Brazee, and as there were several young folks in the family our lot was not a lonesome one. I do not remember that I received any regular wages. I had my board and I got enough money to buy the few clothes that I needed. Operating the mill was not a lucrative business and I think my brother got deeper and deeper into debt every day, so about September the mill was closed down.

I then went up to Cannelton. The town was new, and a cotton mill, large for those days and that locality, had just been completed and put into operation.[3] There were some two or three hundred females employed in the mill. There were also several coal mines in operation. Many boats obtained coal there and the river traffic at that period being rather extensive, the prospects of the town seemed very bright. (In 1888 I revisited the place and was very much surprised at its dilapidated appearance. The cotton mill seemed to have shrunk in size and looked to be a hundred years old, the coal mining had ceased, nearly all river business had disappeared, and the rivalry of Tell City had about crushed all the life out of the place that had seemed so full of hope in 1852.) When I went up to Cannelton from the Brazee mill I fell in with a Dr. Clark, who had just started a small drugstore. I was ostensibly a clerk for him but my clerking duties were of short periods of time, when the Doctor was at his meals or otherwise necessarily absent from the store, while at other times I was employed in doing chores about the house or attending the

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[3] The Indiana Cotton Mills at Cannelton had been chartered by the state legislature in 1848 and began production in January, 1851. The employees were mostly young girls imported from New England factory towns. For an article on the Mills, see *Indiana History Bulletin,* XLII (1965), 73-83.

Doctor's horse. I remember that the factory girls bought a great deal of Scotch snuff. They usually came in at the noon hour when I was in the store and I became quite an adept at dealing out snuff. I never did learn just what they did with the snuff.

I remained with the Doctor until November, 1852, when the charms of the river lured me away and I took boat for Louisville. On arriving at the latter city I obtained a berth on a small boat running as a packet between Louisville and Henderson, and on the first trip down, not far from Cannelton, one of the shafts that turn the wheels was broken and the boat went on to Henderson with one wheel. It started on the return trip in the same condition, and a short distance above Cannelton the other shaft was broken. This left the boat without power so it was tied to the bank and all the crew discharged. Another Louisville boy and myself walked down the river to the first landing and we took the first boat that came along for Louisville. Boatmen did not have to pay passage when they traveled as there was sort of a free exchange existing between them and they assisted each other. When cabin boys wanted to go from one place to another all they had to do was to make it known to the crew that they were in the same line of business and assist in the work and they were carried and fed free. When my chum and I got to Louisville he was dead broke and I had twenty-five cents, which I spent for bus fare from Shippingport to Louisville for the two of us.

My next river trip was on the *Bell Quigley,* a boat that ran in the Green River trade from Louisville to Bowling Green, Kentucky. Boats of moderate size were able to run up this river to Bowling Green because of the river being provided with dams and locks. I made but one trip on this boat, and my sudden quitting the service was owing to the fact that a very disagreeable steward was in charge of the cabin. He seemed to think that it was a great sin for any of the persons

under his control to ever have a leisure moment. When his crew had performed all their usual duties, he would think up some additional work, and if nothing else could be found he would have them scrub the same places almost every day. As I now remember this trip occupied about two weeks. There were some six or eight of us boys in the cabin and under this steward. Before we had arrived at Louisville on our return trip we had all agreed that as soon as the boat struck the wharf we would leave the boat in a body and leave our oppressor in the lurch. The boat got to the wharf at Louisville just before supper time, and as prearranged we were all ready and left the boat without saying goodbye to any one. The next day we went back and drew our wages.

The duties of what are commonly known as "cabin boys" on river steamers are various. Most of them have some general duties to perform in common, while each one, or those of the same class, have separate or individual duties assigned them. What is known as the cabin crew varies in numbers according to the size of the boat, a small vessel having from six to eight, while the very largest boats in my river days might have as many as twenty. These would be divided into classes as follows: stewards, pantrymen, berthmakers, texas tenders, lamp trimmers, and shiners–that is the boys who cleaned the knives and forks and spoons. On a large boat the head steward has control of the entire cabin and the purchase of eatables, and the second steward has personal supervision of the others of the crew. The pantrymen have charge of the dishes and glassware, the bread, crackers, butter, etc. Berthmakers make the berths, clean the staterooms, and keep the cabin clean; the lamp trimmer looks after the lamps; the texas tender looks after the "texas," which is the officers' quarters located on the top of the cabin and under the pilot house. All of these different persons help set and wait on the table at meal times, and remove the tables afterwards. Besides those mentioned there are the chambermaids, who look after the

ladies' cabin and launder everything that has to be washed between ports.

The river life is fascinating to one who likes changes of scene and who wants to be constantly on the move. No one day is like any other. There are new scenes and new people. In old river times there were many boat races, and nothing was so exciting as to have two boats of about equal speed lock horns on the river. I have been on a boat when another boat going in the same direction would come along side of our boat and for hours there would not be any great change in their positions to each other. They would sometimes be so close that you could almost step from one to the other. First one would get a little in advance, and then the other would forge a short distance ahead, and this would be kept up until perhaps one or perhaps both of the boats would have to stop at some town or landing. Whenever a boat that made any pretentions to being fast would be followed by another boat that had a reputation for speed, the head boat resorted to all kinds of devices to keep in the lead, as it seemed to be regarded as somewhat disgraceful or at least humiliating to let another boat pass you. At such times every boy on the boat would do anything to help his boat along. He would go down and help fire the furnaces, or if a wood boat or coal barge was taken in tow to take on fuel, he would go down and work with all his might to help unload the wood or coal in the shortest possible time. It was in these times and under such circumstances that many river steamers were blown up and numbers of lives were lost, but we never thought of such a thing during a race. The only thought was to beat the other boat or bust.

In the early part of the year 1853 I obtained a berth on the *Lady Franklin,* one of the boats constituting a daily mail line between Louisville and St. Louis. There were fourteen boats, one leaving each of the above cities daily. They were chiefly passenger boats, carrying only light freight, passengers, and the mail, and were required to make quick time and regu-

lar schedules. The time allowed for the trip was about two and a half days. There was usually a large number of passengers, as there were but few railroads in those days. In the spring or early summer many rich planters from the South, with their families and servants, would come up on the Mississippi River boats bound for St. Louis, leave these boats at Cairo and take the Ohio River boats to Louisville, such persons being on their way to northern points to spend the summer months. At these times our boats would be very crowded, and hundreds of passengers would have to sleep on mattresses laid on the cabin floors. These Southern planters had peculiar habits and tastes that must be humored. They had to be served with strong coffee in their staterooms about five o'clock in the morning and then they would sleep until nine o'clock, when they would get up for breakfast, after all other passengers had been served. Their habits made extra work but they did not care for expense and were liberal towards all persons with whom they came in contact. For this reason the cabin crew were always glad to see a lot of this class of passenger come aboard. Boat crews had their names for different classes of passengers. Those who were apparently well-to-do and free in spending their money were set down as being all right and entitled to receive the best attention, while those who seemed to consider that their passage money covered all necessary expenditures and who had nothing to contribute for extras, were denominated "greybacks" and received rather scant treatment.

There was much gambling among river travelers in those days. Many professional gamblers made it a regular business to go certain distances on regular line steamers on each trip. They would stay on a boat until they deemed that they had secured most of the booty to be obtained from their victims, or until they had been detected in some of their sharp practices, when they would leave the boat at some stopping place and take the next boat going in a different direction. Sometimes

these sharks would travel in pairs, but apparent strangers to each other, and they would work in concert to fleece their victims. Again a gambler would travel in the character of a rich Southern gentleman, having his Negro body servant, and the servant would stand around during a game and make signs to his master giving him to understand what cards were held by other players. At times these and other swindling schemes and tricks would be discovered and the swindlers would be either roughly handled or would seek safety by concealing themselves and leaving the boat at the earliest opportunity. At other times such practices would lead to bloodshed.

The steward of the *Lady Franklin* was a Madison, Indiana, man, a kind, good-natured German, well known on the river as "Dutch Jake," and he was well liked by his crews, as he always treated them well if they tried to do their duties. I remained on this boat several months and then lost my place by accident. The boat was at St. Louis, and the usual leaving time was five o'clock in the evening, but one day the boat not having started when supper was over, it was whispered among the cabin crew that something was the matter with the machinery, that the boat would not get off before midnight, and that we boys would have a chance to go up into the city. After inquiring of the engineers we were told that it would be eleven o'clock at least before the boat could leave, and some five or six of us concluded that we would go to the theater. It was my first visit to such a place. The cheap seats in those days were in what was called the pit on the ground floor, instead of in the gallery at the top as at the present time. We obtained tickets to the pit, and to me, at least, the play was a most amusing and entertaining one. It was a representation of some Yankee or down-east characters and was called "Yankee Bierce." Never to this day have I seen an exhibition that I thought was so wonderful and amusing, but alas! all my joy was soon to be turned into grief, for when we hurried to the wharf at the close of the play we found that our boat had

gone. We were there before the time set, eleven o'clock, but we learned that the boat, after blowing its whistle for some time to warn all persons ashore to hurry aboard, had left about ten o'clock. We were a sad lot, not only because we were left behind, but because we knew that our services were needed and that the others of the cabin crew would be overworked because of our absence, and that we would have to look for other jobs when we got to Louisville. We had no trouble in obtaining a passage to the latter city as the boat in the same line, the *Telegraph No. 2,* that left the next day, carried us free when we explained the situation to the steward, the only thing required of us being to help wait table. On arriving at Louisville we went aboard our old boat, got our few clothes and the pay due us, and then bid our old friends adieu. We found new boys in our places, as we expected. Our steward, "Dutch Jake," was not very well pleased with our conduct, but he said nothing and only treated us with a chilly silence.

It was now the spring of the year 1853, and after I had remained in Louisville about a week I concluded that I would run up to Madison and visit an uncle who lived there. I went on the Madison packet on the usual terms. On going to the house of my uncle I found the family absent and concluded that I would go back to the boat and return to Louisville on the next trip, but on my way to the wharf I passed the railroad station and seeing a train about ready to start that would go through my old home town, Dupont, the notion suddenly seized me to get on the train and go and see my father's folks.

It had been almost a year and a half since I had taken an unceremonious leave of my home, and during that time no communication whatever had passed between me and any of the members of the family, and I did not know under what circumstances or conditions I would find them. In less than an hour after boarding the train I was at the old town, as the

place was but fourteen miles from Madison. Upon inquiry I learned that my father had moved about a mile into the country. I walked to the place, and when I came into sight of the house I saw my father at work in his garden near the house. I had serious doubts as to how the prodigal son would be received. I was within a few steps of my father before he was aware of my return, and on his looking up and seeing me he stared at me and said—"Well, Harrison, what kind of a boy do you suppose you are?" This was my greeting and welcome home. On going into the house I found the other members of the family but little more demonstrative, but as I was in time for supper and found a place at the family board, I settled down into the old groove.

During the following summer and fall (1853) I worked with my father. We built four small cottages at Dupont, all for the same man, a Mr. Hibner who owned and kept the hotel of the town, at whose hostelry in my earlier days I imagined that it would be all a person could wish to be able to board and sit around the stove in the public sitting room, listening to the stories and adventures told by the boarders. These cottages consisted of four rooms each. I performed most all kinds of work on them. I quarried some of the stone for the foundations and laid some of the material in the walls, and I made and carried mortar for the masons and plasterers, but the largest share of my work was at carpentering. I also did considerable of the painting. When the first house was finished father moved his family into it. As there were seven in our family and only four rooms, it is easy to see that there were not many rooms vacant or set aside for company.

These houses were all completed about November, and father and I began to prepare for a journey to the South for the winter. A carpenter living in our neighborhood the previous winter had contracted to build a house for a planter in Louisiana, and as he was unable for some reason to go and fulfill his contract, he engaged my father to go in his place.

I was very much pleased with the prospect; having had a taste of wandering I longed for more.

We left Dupont about the middle of December, one man, a carpenter, going with us from there. We went by river to Louisville and there we took passage on a slow freight boat for a point in Louisiana some distance below Natchez, Mississippi, the place being a landing called Waterproof.[4] The plantation where the house was to be built was twenty-five miles in the interior from the river. On the way down the river my father had engaged another carpenter to go with us and help on the job, so when we landed our crew consisted of four. At the landing we found an ox team that the planter had sent to haul our tools and belongings out to the plantation; we were expected to go by land and walk. The country was wild and unsettled, there being many miles without the sign of a habitation, and the road was merely a blazed trail through the heavy timber and canebrakes. The first day we traveled only about ten miles, when we stopped at a plantation overnight. This place seemed to be newly settled, and everything was in the rough. They gave us the best they had, and as was the universal custom in the South in those days, they would not accept any pay for our entertainment. We left this place in the early morning and arrived at our destination about noon, it being January 1, 1854. The day was clear and warm, and we sat around out-of-doors all afternoon resting and taking a view of the prospect and contemplating our future labors. The name of the planter was Lewis, a Massachusetts man but a Louisiana slaveholder. He was a capable man with a delicate and refined wife and some nice children. His plantation was quite large and in a good state of repair and cultivation. The surrounding country was covered with dense forests and canebrakes, the nearest town being Natchez, some

[4] The landing was on the west bank of the Mississippi River in Tensas Parish, Louisiana.

fifty or sixty miles away. There were about one hundred slaves on the plantation. All the communication with the outside world by means of public conveyances was by small steamers that came up bayous that connected with larger streams and then reached the Mississippi. These boats would come up the bayou that ran by this plantation in February or March and take out the cotton or other products from the plantations and bring up the stores and supplies for the following year. When this work was done the boats would not appear again until the next season; consequently their annual trips were looked forward to with much anxiety by the entire population, white and black. These bayous are usually deep and narrow with but little current. The boats that ran up as far as the Lewis plantation were very small, yet they often would land where the stream was too narrow for the boat to turn around and it would have to run backwards to a place that was wide enough to admit of it making a turn.

There were no sawmills in that vicinity so Mr. Lewis had purchased a sawmill and had been for several years sawing and drying lumber with which to have his house built. Almost all the lumber used was cypress. The house was quite large. It was set upon pillars about seven feet above the ground, and there was a story and a half above that. I think there were twelve rooms, some of them being quite large. There was a wide gallery (porch) across the entire front. All of the work had to be done by hand. There were no ready-made doors, sash, frames, or flooring, and as the flooring was of ash it was no easy job to make it ready to be put down. Our working force was augmented by one or two men who came through the county looking for work, one of whom I remember was from northern Indiana and was named Markell. The walls of the house were not plastered, but were ceiled, and this was all prepared by hand. There was not a strike or a lockout during the progress of the work, although we worked almost from daylight until dark. We worked on

this house until in the month of June, and by this time the lower story was about completed; then for some reason, I know not what, we left the job unfinished.

The country about this plantation was full of wild game and the Sunday recreation for the younger and ungodly portion of our crowd was to take a gun and go in quest of some sort of game. Ducks, geese, and turkeys were very numerous, and very frequently deer were to be seen near the plantation. In a field not far from the residence was a patch of black peas and at times the entire surface seemed to be alive with ducks, geese, and turkeys. One day one of our men saw a number of turkeys in the field. Taking a gun he slipped around near where they were feeding and in about an hour he returned with two fine fat turkeys. The woods were full of squirrels and they were about the only game that I could ever get close enough to, to get in an effective shot, although at one time I got a duck. The game that was killed served to replace a good deal of hog meat that we would otherwise have had to garnish our palates with. In May the blackberries were ripe, and there were great quantities of rich, luscious ones. The soil was rich, the bushes luxuriant, and the fruit ripening in the shade was most excellent.

When we left the plantation in June we built us a small rowboat in which we put our tool chests and luggage, and five of us started down the bayou Macon, which stream emptied into bayou Tensas. After reaching the latter stream we found the country in a much higher state of cultivation and improvement. There were many fine plantations and residences along the banks. At the end of our first day's journey we stopped at a plantation for the night and were treated very generously, although the planter was not at home. The next day about 10 A.M. we reached a point on the stream that was eighteen miles from Natchez, Mississippi, where we made a trade with a man to haul our traps to Natchez, and we again took to footing it across the country. The road ran through fine

plantations and a considerable part of the way was along the shores of Lake Concordia. We reached Natchez just at sundown, and the city on the hill was a very welcome sight. We remained there all the next day and at night a Cincinnati slow freight steamer came along and we took passage for Louisville. We were ten days or two weeks on the journey, and I believe that the trip cost very little more than our board would have cost on shore. There were about fifty passengers aboard the boat and there must have been about three hundred young mocking birds that some of the passengers were trying to bring north, but the mortality among the little songsters was very great and many of them were buried at sea. On arriving at Louisville the members of our party went their different ways and I have not beheld any of the strangers since. My father came on home at once, while I remained in Louisville for a week visiting old friends, then I also returned to Dupont.

In the summer of 1854 father concluded to visit Sharpsville in Tipton County where some Dupont people had recently located. With father and my brother David, then about thirteen years old, we traveled by train to Franklin and then took a train for Martinsville with the intention of paying a visit to my brother William, who had recently married and was living at that place and whom we had not seen for several years. The railroad from Franklin to Martinsville was of the old flat-bar type, constructed of wooden stringers with strips of iron spiked on them. The road was getting old and the cars jolted almost as much as a common road wagon. The train could not be called a "lightning express" or a "fast mail" as it required some six or seven hours to cover the distance of twenty-six miles. I remember getting off the front end of the train and then getting on the rear car while the train was running at usual speed.

When we reached Martinsville we learned that my

brother was not at home, so after remaining at the hotel overnight, we started on foot the next morning for Mooresville, fourteen miles distant. We remained overnight at Mooresville and the next morning we took passage in the mail hack for Plainfield, and on arriving there we took cars on the Terre Haute, Indianapolis, and Richmond Railroad for Indianapolis.

This was my first visit to the capital city. It seemed a more wonderful place to me then than it does now (1907). There were less than fifteen thousand people in the city at that time. The cars ran into the new Union Depot, and with the passing trains and the ringing of the engine bells I thought that there could not possibly be a more lively or exciting place. We visited the old State House and a look into the dome filled me with wonder. It seemed as high as the sky and it looked as though the stars were shining in an azure background.

After spending the remainder of the day and a night at the place, we boarded the cars on the Indianapolis and Peru Railroad for Sharpsville. This road for the first twenty miles or more out of Indianapolis was of the flat-bar construction but it was in a better condition than the Franklin and Martinsville road. The run from Indianapolis to Sharpsville, fifty miles, occupied some four or five hours.

Tipton County was then very sparsely settled. The land was very level and heavily timbered and it was an immense task to clear a farm. Sharpsville contained about two hundred people. E. M. Sharp, the founder of the town, who removed there from Jennings County, had erected a flouring mill, and there were some merchants and other businessmen who had removed there from Dupont. About the only way to get into or out of the town was by the railroad, as there had not been any highways opened up through the woods. The streets of the town were full of stumps and logs and it was difficult for vehicles to travel over them. After staying in the village a few days father concluded to look at the country a little farther

west and we struck out through the woods afoot. We walked many miles before coming to any farms, settlement or roads, and at the end of a day's journey we arrived in Michigantown, in Clinton County, located on the Michigan Road which ran from Madison through Indianapolis to Lake Michigan. This thoroughfare was laid out and improved by the State in the early days of statehood to form a connecting link between the Great Lakes on the north and the Ohio River on the south. We remained at Michigantown one night and then returned to Sharpsville.

On this trip I had my first view of a prairie. On approaching it I thought we were coming to a body of water, as we could see through the trees and there was a vacancy beyond. The prairie was small but it served to give one an idea of what land looks like without timber. We arrived in Sharpsville in due time, weary, footsore, and hot, as it was midsummer. While there father contracted for a house and lot with a view of moving the next spring. In a few days we returned to Dupont by railroad, passing through Indianapolis and making the entire trip in one day, which seemed quite marvelous, as the distance was about one hundred and twenty miles. After getting home we resumed our old occupation of carpentering. I remember that we made a number of coffins, as carpenters did such work in those days. They were generally cheap affairs, covered with black cotton velvet. Sometimes we worked nearly all night when there seemed a hurry to get the funeral over. A very short, fleshy man died in Dupont, the father of one of my chums, and we were called upon to make his coffin. It was so broad that it would not go through an ordinary doorway and the body had to be carried out of the house to be placed in it. There were no undertakers or "funeral directors" in that locality in those days, and sometimes I was sent with the coffin to remove the lid and replace it at the funeral. Most often it was at the burial of a child, and it was not a pleasant task to replace the cover that

hid forever from view the loved form from a sorrowing mother.

Thus the summer and fall passed. During the winter of 1854 and 1855 I attended the village school, and this was the last schooling of the ordinary kind that I ever received. During this time I passed my eighteenth birthday. When the spring came we prepared for the move to the wilds of Tipton County, Sharpsville. My father still owned our old friend, the mare "Sal," and it was arranged for me to take her, and she to take me, to the new home, so on a bright day in April I left Dupont and rode to my Grandfather Vawter's near Vernon, where my youngest sister, Sarah J., was still living. After making them a short visit I rode to Edinburg in Johnson County and detoured towards Martinsville in another effort to see my brother William, but as on my previous visit he was not at home and I had had my extra ride in vain. I stayed at Martinsville overnight and early in the morning took the road for Indianapolis, where I arrived near noon. After refreshing man and beast I struck out for Noblesville, arriving there at nightfall, having ridden over fifty miles that day. The next morning I entered upon the last stage of my trip. After passing Tipton all signs of roads disappeared and I had nothing to guide me but the railroad. The country was covered with water. Several times I came near miring in swampy places, and I was finally forced to take to the railroad track and follow it into the village in the woods. Our folks had not yet arrived but they came in a few days by train and our household goods also came about the same time. We soon became settled in our new home and my father secured carpentry work in the erection of a storehouse for a Mr. Fish who had moved from Dupont.

The spring and summer of 1855 were very wet. It seemed to rain almost every day and it interfered very greatly with our work. The entire country was covered with water. The land was so level and covered with such heavy timber and

underbrush that the water ran off very slowly. There being no roads except mere trails cut through the woods, it was impossible to haul anything on wagons, and I have seen a team with an empty wagon stalled in the streets of Sharpsville. The result of this extreme wetness was a great deal of malaria; nearly every one in the county had the "ague." There were not enough well people in the town to wait on the sick, and the only physician in the place lay in his bed and measured out medicine, mostly quinine, to persons who were able to come for it. I had never been sick, and did not have the regular fever and ague, but my system became full of malaria and I had a spell of fever which confined me to my bed and finally developed into what is called the "dumb ague."

I became disgusted with the country and as soon as I could drag myself up to the railroad I took passage for Indianapolis. I may have acted rather cowardly, for at this time none of our folks were well, but I did not stop to reflect upon the rightfulness of my action.

In the summer of 1855 my Uncle "Dick" Burns, father's brother, visited Sharpsville and worked with us for a while. While there a man came through the country with a feather-cleaning machine, and my uncle, concluding that it was a money-maker, purchased it and had it shipped to Morgantown, Indiana. He had proposed that we might operate it together, so when I left Sharpsville I went to Morgantown and found Uncle Dick operating his machine. The machine consisted of a long drum into which were put old and dirty feathers out of beds, and then steam was turned into the drum, which was kept revolving by turning a crank. The feathers would be thoroughly cleaned by the steam and then were emptied onto a clean floor in a closed room and swept and dashed around with a broom until dry, the dirt in the feathers falling to the floor. The feathers could then be removed without taking up the dirt.

I worked at the business a few days but it did not impress

me favorably and I drifted on to Martinsville, the county seat of Morgan County. After being there a few days I secured a job of carpentering. I worked on a dwelling being erected for Dr. Robert H. Tarleton, a leading physician and druggist. It was a brick house and was one of the finest in the town at that time, but would be considered very commonplace at the present day. I remained there some two months, and the "dumb ague" still hanging to me I concluded to move on.

It is singular how this ague works. I had a good appetite and performed a day's work each day, but about every other day a spell would come on and I would jerk and shiver for a while and after this I would go on with my work. Then about every other night I would have night sweats. I would wake up and feel as though I had been drenched with ice water. My clothing and the bed clothes would be very wet. One day I discovered some dark places on my body that looked like flowers and I was much alarmed, thinking that my disease was causing me to mortify, but I finally solved the mystery by discovering that the pictures on my body corresponded with the flowers in the calico of which the bed comfort was made under which I had been sleeping. The perspiration from my body had caused the comfort to fade and the flowers had been transferred to me.

In the fall of 1855 I left Martinsville and went to Wirt, my birthplace. My uncle Tolman Burns lived there besides some other relatives. I was told that a man who lived out in the country had some medicine to sell that would cure all diseases, and my ague still hanging to me, I went out to see the man. While I experienced some relief from the workings of the medicine, yet I did not get all of the malaria out of my system until some months later. I remained at Wirt but a few days, when I took all my personal belongings and tramped to Madison. There was then a new plank road from Madison running several miles to the north, which made the walking

very easy. The plank roads were the first effort in the state to construct improved graded roads. They were very nice and smooth when first built, but when the planks began to decay they became full of holes, rough, and very undesirable and finally all the planks had to be removed.

On reaching Madison I visited my Uncle Miles Burns for a day or two and then I turned my face again towards the river, and finding the old steward "Dutch Jake" on the *"Blue Wing,"* a Madison and Cincinnati packet, he kindly "dead-headed" me to Cincinnati, where I procured a berth as cabin boy on a small boat bound for Pittsburgh. This boat was what might be called a tramp or itinerant. It had no regular route but would go to whatever points freight could be secured. The boat was owned by two men, one being captain and the other clerk, their residences being in Pittsburgh. On arriving at Pittsburgh the boat laid up for some two weeks, the owners visiting their families, after which time the boat was loaded for lower river points, the ultimate destination being the Tennessee River, up which stream the boat ascended as far as Florence, Alabama, which was about the head of navigation. It was December when we were there and the weather was most delightful. When the boat headed down stream a load was taken on at different points for St. Louis, consisting chiefly of pine lumber, pig iron, and peanuts. The hold of the boat was filled with green lumber, the lower decks were covered with pig iron, while the guards, boiler, and hurricane decks were filled and covered with sacks of peanuts to such an extent that but little of the boat could be seen from the shore. All along the Tennessee River, at the different landings, great quantities of large sacks of peanuts were piled up awaiting shipment. The sacks were of white muslin and would hold about twenty bushels of nuts, and being light they could be carried to any part of the boat without trouble. When the boat was fully loaded it was down in the water so that the lower guards were only slightly above the water. We got

along fairly well while going down stream in the Tennessee and Ohio rivers, but on reaching Cairo and the Mississippi we struck a different state of affairs. It was then up stream and a swift current to face with a very heavily loaded boat having not very powerful engines. We were five or six days going from Cairo to St. Louis, a distance of about two hundred miles by river. At times, on striking a swift current on rounding a point, it was difficult for the boat to make any headway at all, and sometimes it would be necessary to back out and try a different course. I remember one day when such a place was reached and the boat was exerting its greatest powers to stem the current, two men in a skiff rowed up and passed the boat, leaving us behind to their great amusement. But we finally reached St. Louis, and the boat was relieved of its burden.

After remaining in St. Louis for a short time, the boat was loaded for Lower Mississippi River points with a miscellaneous lot of freight. At that date but very few towns on the river between St. Louis and New Orleans had railroads, and all the freight carried into or out of the places had to be transported by water. It was near Christmas when we arrived in New Orleans, and it seemed strange to me that every tree should be green and the flowers in bloom at that time of the year. A few days after arriving in the Crescent City it was learned that the Ohio and Mississippi rivers were frozen over at Cairo and that boats could not go above that point. This caused many boats to discharge their crews and lay up at New Orleans until the ice thawed. Our boat laid up and the captain gave me the privilege of remaining on the boat and continuing at my usual duties, which I did for a few weeks, when I found a boat that was loading for St. Louis and got a berth on it, but when the boat arrived at Cairo the rivers were still frozen solid, so the boat laid up and discharged its crew. I was so lucky as to find an old river boy, Charlie Northrup, whom I had met on the Pittsburgh boat, as steward

on the *Highflyer,* a Madison (Indiana) boat, which was preparing for a trip to New Orleans, and I was given a berth on that boat.

The *Highflyer* made two or three trips from Cairo to New Orleans and back before the rivers were free from ice, but in March the boat got up to Louisville, and then entered the Louisville and St. Louis mail line and continued to make weekly trips until in July, when it was compelled to lay up at New Albany on account of low water. This was now the summer of 1856, and the Ohio River got very low that year. On the last trip of the *Highflyer* from St. Louis to Louisville the boat had great trouble in getting over some of the sand bars. We were stuck on the Scuffletown bar, a short distance above Evansville, for twenty-four hours. Several other boats were in the same predicament. In such cases they almost lift boats over bars by means of derricks and blocks and tackle.

On the afternoon that the boat was on the bar many persons—there were a number of passengers on the boat—went bathing in the river, the water on the bar not being more than two or three feet deep. I was out bathing when I stepped off of the lower side of the bar where the water was deep, and the current over the bar was very swift, which made it difficult to swim up stream to get back on the bar, and I had my doubts as to what my fate would be. My thoughts were very rapid. I knew that if I did not get on to the bar again I would be carried down stream several miles before I could get to the shore and that then I should have to walk up the river several more miles before I could get to the bar and come down to the boat. Then I reflected that the boat might get over the bar and go on its way before I could reach it. I resolved to try to regain the bar against the swift current. I swam with all my strength and after several minutes—which seemed hours—my toes began to touch the sand and little by little I gained headway until I planted my feet on the bar and stood erect. I was very careful after this to stay safely on the bar.

When the boat arrived at Louisville, or rather Portland, for the boat was too large to go through the canal, it was taken over to New Albany for repairs and a thorough cleaning. About a month afterwards on going over to the boat—I made my home in Louisville—the captain said that I could go to work at cleaning up the cabin, putting down carpets, etc. In a short time Charlie Northrup, the steward, appeared and we worked together until the boat was in good shape. At this time the owners of the boat concluded to send the vessel down to the Lower Mississippi to run as a packet in the coasting trade. The river was still very low, there being but twenty inches on the bar between New Albany and Portland when the *Highflyer* crossed over to lay in supplies. There was a rumor that the yellow fever was very bad at New Orleans and Captain Wright was undetermined for some time whether he would go with the boat down the river or not, and if he did not go it was understood that Mr. Woolfolk, the clerk, was to be the captain. There was no admiration existing between Northrup and Woolfolk; Charlie said that if Captain Wright did not go, he would not either, and I had determined to do as Charlie did. The day and almost the hour for the departure of the boat had arrived when it was announced that Captain Wright was not going and that Woolfolk was to be in command. Charlie and I packed up our duds, drew our wages, and went ashore, and we did not get to the top of the levee before a cabin crew of Negroes swarmed aboard of the boat, they having evidently been engaged and held in readiness by Mr. Woolfolk. The vessel departed for the lower rivers, but it was not destined to go far. As it came to a bar about one hundred miles below Louisville it could not cross because of the low stage of water, and had to lay up until there was a rise in the river, which was not for some months later.

After staying at Louisville a few weeks I went down to the river and at the Cincinnati mail line wharf found a stern-wheeler that was the mail boat for Cincinnati, the larger boats

having had to lay up. I found my old friend Charlie Northrup, and he gave me a berth. The trip up to Cincinnati was a slow and tedious one, the boat being on sand bars about half of the time, and on reaching Cincinnati it laid up. It seemed that the river was going almost entirely dry. Persons crossed at Cincinnati with horses. Charlie and I concluded that we would quit steamboating until there was more water.

Charlie had an uncle who was working in a store that sold wire goods—screens, bird cages, and that class of articles made partly of wood and partly of wire. A Mr. Earl owned the store. I went with Charlie to call on his uncle, who was engaged in putting wire in bird cages, and while there I expressed the opinion that I could make the wooden portion of the cages. The man said that Mr. Earl was needing some one to do that work, and on seeing him I engaged to go to work. The cages were of different sizes. The smallest cages were known as canary bird cages and the largest were cages for mocking birds. For making the woodwork of the small cages I got $1.50 per dozen, and $4.00 per dozen for the largest. I would make a dozen a day of the small ones.

I think it was early in September that I went to work at making cages and I continued there until in October, the October election occurring while I was in Cincinnati. This was a presidential year, 1856. There were three candidates, Buchanan the Democratic, Fremont the Republican, and Fillmore the American or Know-Nothing. There was considerable excitement during the campaign, but as I was not quite twenty years old and could not vote, I did not take very much interest in the election, but I felt that if I could vote I would vote for Fillmore.

Soon after the election I made up my mind to return to Louisville and then to go back to a life on the river when there was a higher stage of water and boats began to run again. The Ohio and Mississippi Railroad had lately opened for traffic and I concluded that I would go by rail to Madison

and visit my Uncle Miles and then go on to Louisville by river, but my plans were to be changed without any action on my part. The O. and M. road crossed the Madison and Indianapolis road at North Vernon, and I expected to change cars there in the afternoon and reach Madison that evening, but for some cause the O. and M. train was behind time. I missed the connection and there was not to be another train to Madison for twenty-four hours. The missing of this railroad connection perhaps changed the entire current of my life and brought me to my present position.

My Grandfather Vawter lived two miles from North Vernon, and as I had to wait an entire day for a train I thought I would go over to grandfather's and see my sister Sallie, then ten years old, who had lived there since 1846. When I got there and had talked over matters with the folks my sister expressed a wish to visit our brother William at Martinsville, and as I had plenty of time we went to Martinsville. While there my brother thought it would be a good idea for me to give up my intention of going back to a river life and instead return to Martinsville and find some other employment. After our visit to Martinsville my sister and I visited Indianapolis and then I took her home to grandfather's, went on to Madison, then to Louisville, obtained my few belongings and returned to Martinsville. The evening that I reached Martinsville the Democrats were celebrating their victory at the October election, Mr. Alexander B. Conduit of Mooresville having been elected representative in the legislature by thirteen majority, and the Democrats having elected all the county officers also. I made my home with my brother William, he being an attorney-at-law and the partner of Daniel McClure, who had been elected Secretary of State at the recent election and who was afterwards paymaster in the United States Army. My first employment at Martinsville was as

clerk in a store. A man named Phillips, who had previously been a farmer and then the keeper of a small hotel and with whom I boarded when I was there the year before, had bought the old stock of a retiring merchant, and he needed some one to help him dispose of it. Neither one of us knew anything at all about the business. He was as much out of his element in a dry-goods store as a city store clerk would be on a farm. In a short time I had entire control of affairs, and I tried to learn something about the business. I slept in the store, got up early in the morning, made a fire, and swept out. I do not think that our sales averaged ten dollars a day.

In the spring of 1857 Mr. Phillips concluded to dispose of the stock at cost and had posters printed stating the fact. This brought some of the town ladies in to see what we had, and when they asked for shoes all I had to show them were coarse shoes, the sizes being from six to eight, and they were much disgusted of course. This was a sample of what we had to sell. When the stock was closed out my brother thought I had better go into his office and see if I could learn anything about the law. I did so and this was the beginning of my career as a lawyer, if I am justified in saying that I ever became a lawyer.

During the years 1857, 1858, and 1859 I remained in the office of my brother pretending to study law. Looking back now over all the intervening years I can realize what a farce it was and how very little I learned. I was just at the age to regard life as a time for pleasure only. The young people of Martinsville were a jolly set and I was in for anything and everything that led to fun and excitement. At that time the circuit court met at Martinsville twice a year, in May and November, and it was at these times that I first saw or knew anything about any of the eminent lawyers of the state. At these terms of court Thomas A. Hendricks, Albert G. Porter, Hugh O'Neal, and Byron K. Elliott of Indianapolis, Martin M. Ray of Shelbyville, Samuel H. Buskirk and James Hughes

of Bloomington, James S. Hester of Nashville, and Christian C. Nave of Danville often attended.

Colonel Nave usually walked over from Danville on the Sunday before the Monday when court would begin. It was at Martinsville that I first saw Daniel W. Voorhees. In the year 1859 my brother gave me an interest in his business. I well remember the first suit that I ever tried. A man near Paragon, seven miles west of Martinsville, was prosecuted for obstructing a highway and he came to get my brother to defend him. For some reason I was sent. I had not the remotest idea how I should proceed. The trial was before a justice of the peace in a schoolhouse. Luckily for me no attorney appeared for the plaintiff. A jury was called, the evidence heard, and I made some kind of a speech to the jury but have not the least idea what I said and perhaps my hearers were in the same fix. The jury in a short time returned a verdict in favor of my client; why, I never knew. Perhaps it was on account of sympathy for him or me, or for both of us. It was a cold, gloomy day, the roads were muddy. I rode fourteen miles on horseback, spent the entire day, and my part of the fee was less than $2.00, but my success amply paid me.

I became twenty-one years of age in December, 1857, and at the spring election in 1858 I cast my first vote. I voted the Democratic ticket, just why I did not know, but my brother and his associates were Democrats and I suppose that I naturally fell into their way of thinking. I believe that the politics of most young voters are adopted because of their surroundings and environments.

Late in the year 1859 I began to think of seeking a location where I could begin business for myself. I thought it would be best to seek some out-of-the-way place where the people would probably not know much and would not discover my ignorance. Bloomfield, the county seat of Greene County, was then thirty miles from a railroad and I concluded to pay the place a visit and examine the outlook. I left Martinsville

on horseback, rode to Bloomington and from there to Bloomfield, arriving in the forenoon. I stopped at the hotel, visited the courthouse, made the object of my visit known to some of the county officers, and they gave me a kind invitation to locate in their midst. After spending three or four hours there I left with the impression that I had found the place where I should settle down.

I returned to Martinsville by the way of Spencer and Gosport and passed through Paragon, the place of my first legal battle and victory. In January, 1860, I left Martinsville for Bloomfield, my new home. Going by private conveyance to Gosport, then by railroad to Bloomington, I then took passage in the mail hack for Bloomfield, this hack making two trips a week and supplying the Bloomfielders with their mail. It was a long, tedious ride over rough and muddy roads. I was the only passenger, and all my worldly belongings, packed in a small trunk and small box, were carried in the hack. We arrived at our destination about dark, and after paying my hack fare had just three dollars left with which to set up in business. I had the temerity to go to the hotel to board, without knowing where the money was to come from to settle the bill. It is true that my board bill was not enormous, as the hotel people agreed to give me a room and board for three dollars per week, but that sum seemed considerable when I did not have a cent with which to pay it. But the good people were kind to me for they never once asked me for money and let me pay just as I could.

The box that I took with me contained my law library, consisting of eight volumes of Blackford's *Reports* and, I think, eleven volumes of Indiana *Reports,* which were all that had been issued to that date, together with a set of the Revised Statutes of 1852. A doctor kindly gave me leave to occupy a portion of his office. I went to a carpenter shop where I was permitted to make a rough case to hold my few books and then I hung out my shingle as a full-fledged lawyer. I can

never forget how kindly I was treated by all the people with whom I came in contact.

The county officers were all of my political faith and they each seemed to realize my financial straits and manifested a desire to help me. I received just five dollars from the unpaid fees that I had left at Martinsville. In a short time I began to assist some of the county officers with their work, especially the clerk and recorder. It was a presidential election year (1860) and they were interested in politics and away from their offices a great deal of the time, leaving me in charge, so I was forced to learn how to perform the duties of the offices, which was a great benefit to me, and in my later life I have realized that it was the very best schooling I could have obtained. The money they paid me for my services helped me to meet my expenses.

In May the clerk and recorder went to Terre Haute to attend the Democratic district convention, leaving me in charge of their offices. After an absence of several days they returned and I was dumbfounded when they told me that I had been nominated for district attorney, the officer who prosecuted State cases in the common pleas court and before justices of the peace. These good friends had put my name before the convention without my knowledge, and claimed the nomination in behalf of Greene County, although I was known to but very few of its inhabitants. The Ninth Judicial District was composed of Putnam, Clay, Owen, and Greene counties, all reliably Democratic, so there was no doubt as to my election. The emoluments of the office were not great, the only compensation being fees taxed against persons convicted of crimes, but at the next session of the legislature an annual salary of $200 was provided, which seemed munificent.

When my term of office commenced, intoxicating liquors were being sold at several places in the county in violation of law and I immediately caused a large number of prosecutions to be commenced. At the first term of court in Greene County

my fees amounted to more than $100, including $55 taxed against one liquor seller. The action of my friends in causing me to be nominated for an office considered of but little importance resulted in helping me greatly in a financial way, gave me a start in the law practice, and was the real beginning of my career in life. My term of office was for two years, ending in October 1862. By this time I had begun to acquire a small civil practice.

I believe that the first civil case in which I received a fee in Greene County was one in which I appeared voluntarily and in which I did not have a client. Shortly after settling in Bloomfield persons living in the northwest corner of the county took steps to form a new county out of portions of Greene, Sullivan, Vigo, and Clay counties. Their petition was submitted to the board of county commissioners, was rejected, and the petitioners appealed to the circuit court and had Daniel W. Voorhees come down from Terre Haute to present their case. The citizens of Greene County had taken no action to defend the case and I voluntarily appeared and moved to dismiss the appeal on the ground that no appeal would lie in such a proceeding. The court, Solomon Claypool being the judge, sustained the motion and the case was dismissed and no further action was ever taken in the matter. It was something of a victory for a young slip of an ignorant country lawyer to defeat the "tall sycamore of the Wabash" in a lawsuit. The sheriff of our county, William G. Moss, felt so elated over the matter that he gave me a five-dollar bill, and that afternoon I went to a remote part of the county to make my first political speech.

The campaign of 1860 was a very exciting one. The country was just on the brink of the Civil War. The Democratic party was divided over the slavery question, Stephen A. Douglas being the candidate of the northern Democrats for President while John C. Breckinridge was the candidate of the southern wing of the party. Thomas A. Hendricks was

nominated by the Douglas Democrats for Governor of the state, and Henry S. Lane was the Republican candidate for the same office. They both spoke at Bloomfield, large crowds attending, but the Hendricks meeting had much the largest attendance, the whole town and suburbs being filled with people. It served in after years as a crowd with which to compare other assemblages. It was said by some old residents that but once before was there a larger crowd in Bloomfield and that was when "Bland was hung," referring to the execution of a man in an early day for murder. In those days efforts were made by political parties to secure the longest parades or delegations of persons attending meetings, and to erect the tallest poles. At the Hendricks meetings there were some large delegations from the outlying townships. Six or eight yoke of oxen were hitched to some wagons which were loaded with glee clubs or young ladies dressed in white. There was one delegation about a mile long, and when it passed the residence of "Aunt Nancy" Hatfield, a prominent character of the town, she declared that if all the people in the parade voted for Douglas, he would be elected by millions. The Democracy was successful in the county election, but owing to the division in the party the Republicans carried the state and nation, Lincoln was elected President, and the next step in the political history of the country was the inauguration of war between the states.

The years 1861 to 1865 were exciting and mournful times. The organization of companies and regiments for the war, the separation of relatives and friends, the anxiety for the safety of those who went to the front, kept everyone in a state of feverish excitement and suspense. News from the latest battle was awaited with great anxiety and the list of dead and wounded was read with fear and trembling by those who had loved ones in the engagements.

I continued to reside at Bloomfield until in March, 1864, when, with two friends, Matthew J. Lyons and Austin H. Perham, I concluded to go to the gold fields of Montana. We went from Bloomfield to St. Louis, then to Atchison, Kansas, and then by stagecoach to Salt Lake City. We were compelled to wait at Atchison two weeks to obtain seats in the coach, the seats being engaged in advance that far ahead. At that time there was a daily line of coaches between Atchison and Sacramento, California, known as the Ben. Holliday line. The coaches carried the mails, express matter, and nine passengers to each coach. The fare was $175 from Atchison to Salt Lake City, a distance of twelve hundred miles, and they traveled day and night, the scheduled time being one hundred and twenty-five miles for each twenty-four hours. We did not make the time and were fifteen days and nights making the trip. All the sleep that passengers obtained was what they could secure while sitting in their seats. At first it was very hard to obtain any rest, but in a few nights I got so that I would sleep practically the entire night and I felt none the worse on reaching Salt Lake City. Each passenger was allowed baggage to the extent of twenty-five pounds and many expedients were resorted to in order to reduce the baggage desired to be taken to the required limit. Everyone put on extra clothing and very spare persons were made to look as though they needed to take anti-fat medicine. I had on at least two suits of clothing. The result of these practices was that after the stage had been on its way for a short time the extra clothing was removed and stored under the seats or in other places about the coach.

Four horses were used to the coach and changes were made about every ten miles. Eating stations were established at such places as the stages were supposed to reach about meal times, but often we were delayed by storms or other matters and we would be without anything to eat for ten or twelve hours. After reaching a point one hundred miles west of the

Missouri River there were very few persons living along the route. The stations that were maintained by the stage company were about all the sign of settlement. The farther west we went, the farther all supplies had to be hauled in wagons, and I was surprised to find the meals as good as they were. The prices ranged from fifty cents in Kansas to one dollar as we neared Salt Lake City. Two years later on my return I found that these prices had doubled. At one eating station on the plains they said that all the firewood they used was hauled one hundred miles and that men were gone two weeks after a load of wood.

We arrived in Salt Lake City in the early part of April, 1864. That city was reaping a great harvest from the throngs that were passing through on their way to the mines in Montana. Everything seemed to be owned or controlled by the Mormon Church. The hotel at which we stopped was a church hotel, a theater had just been built that belonged to the church, and the principal stores were operated by the church. We remained in Salt Lake City near a week. This was what was called conference week with the Mormons, being the time for an annual gathering of members of the church from all parts of the territory, and the holding of daily services. I attended the tabernacle one day and heard Brigham Young and other prominent Mormons speak. It would have been considered a very wild and improbable statement to have then predicted that railroads would connect that isolated spot with both the Atlantic and Pacific oceans in a few years.

My party, with some others that we met in Salt Lake City, engaged a team to haul us, our baggage, bedding, and provisions to Virginia City, Montana, a distance of four hundred miles. We traveled by day, camped at night, each mess doing its own cooking, and we made our beds on the ground. It took us nine days to make the trip, arriving in Virginia City about the twentieth of April, 1864.

At the time of my arrival there were some two thousand

people located in Alder Gulch, and these constituted the bulk of the population of the territory, except Indians. The Territory of Montana had been created but a short time before this date by an act of Congress, separating it from Idaho. At this time everything was in a chaotic condition. If there were any laws in force no one knew what they were, and had there been any laws, there were no courts to administer them. Prior to this time, miners' courts and vigilance committees had been administering justice. In the early summer a mail route, by stagecoach, was established to Salt Lake City, and with the arrival of Federal officers, appointed under the organization act, the community began to feel that it had some connecting link with the "States," as the eastern portion of the country was universally designated.

During the winter of 1863-64 the legislature of Idaho—of which Montana was then a part—met at Lewistown, and the representative from the Montana portion returned to Virginia City in the summer of 1864, bringing with him a copy of some of the laws enacted relating to proceedings in courts, the same having been printed for use of members during the session. This copy was the only guide that courts and lawyers had to enable them to administer justice. The writer, by common consent, was made the custodian of this copy, and after preparing a crude index, he was regarded as a legal encyclopedia by the members of the legal profession and was daily consulted as to the statute law.

During the summer of 1864 the population of Alder Gulch was greatly increased by immigrants from the States. Virginia City put on city airs. Some good buildings were put up and one business house was built of stone. All that a person had to do to acquire a building lot was to take possession of it, if he found it vacant, and to stake out its lines. There was not an acre of land in the territory owned by a private individual. None of the land had even been surveyed. If a person who occupied a lot abandoned its possession, he

lost his claim and anyone else could locate on it. There were some miners' laws as to locating mining claims, but these conferred possessory rights only. The summer of 1864 was the banner period for Alder Gulch and Virginia City. I think it is safe to say that tons of placer gold were taken out. The supplies were brought in by freight wagons, with ox teams mostly, and the greater portion crossed the plains, coming from Missouri River points, but some freight came from Fort Benton, having been carried there by boats up the Missouri. Most of the flour, butter, eggs, and vegetables were brought from the Salt Lake Valley, three or four hundred miles away. The butter and eggs were not always the freshest. In the summer of 1865 an enterprising immigrant brought in a few domesticated cows and manufactured a few pounds of what was called ranch butter, which he put on the market at the very modest price of three dollars per pound.

The population consisted of persons from all trades and professions. Doctors, lawyers, schoolteachers, mechanics, and laborers were found working side by side in the mines. The writer shoveled pay dirt for two days at $6.00 per day, and then secured an easy job of making sluice boxes. Sunday was the busiest day of the week in the towns. Miners bought their supplies for the week. Gambling houses and saloons were also well patronized. A church was organized, and the gamblers and saloon keepers were among the most liberal contributors. It would naturally be supposed that in such a community there would be a great deal of lawlessness, but there was not. Everyone seemed to be a peace officer, keeping an eye upon everyone else. It was generally understood that theft merited death.

During the summer of 1864, Samuel T. Hauser of St. Louis—afterward governor of Montana—and Nathaniel P. Langford of Iowa, opened the first bank in the territory. Their banking house consisted of a plank shanty about sixteen by eighteen feet, and Mr. Langford had his sleeping apartment in the rear. They had a safe which would have served the

needs of the ordinary country merchant back in the States.

In the fall of 1864 the first election was held, at which county officers and members of the legislature were elected. My two law partners, W. J. McCormick and William Y. Pemberton, were both elected as members of the legislature. Pemberton has since served as chief justice of the Montana supreme court. The legislature met on December 12 at Bannack, which was then the territorial capital. In the chaotic condition of the laws the members of the legal profession of Virginia City had deemed it advisable to organize and draft some bills to be presented to the legislature for adoption, and committees were appointed to prepare bills on different subjects. But as is often the case under such circumstances, each member of each committee waited for the other members to do the work, and consequently when the time arrived for the meeting of the legislature, nothing had been done by any committee.

The writer, being a member of the committee elected to prepare a civil code of practice and realizing that if anything was accomplished in that line he must do it, procured a copy of the Missouri statutes, and from the practice act therein found, he drafted a practice code, making such changes as he deemed suited to the wild mountain regions and to the population among which and upon which it was to operate. His work was not completed until some time after the convening of the legislature, and when it was sent to that body for its action, a request came from my partners that I prepare a criminal practice code also. By arduous work this task was accomplished a short while before the time fixed for the legislature to adjourn. This work was, of course, crude and imperfect, but when it was suggested in the legislature that changes should be made, the objection was raised that if changes were attempted the end of the session would arrive and nothing would be done. So both codes were rushed through without change, and imperfect as they were, they became the founda-

tion of the practice codes that are in force in the state at the present time. The enactments are to be found in the statutes of the territory printed in 1866. The legislature allowed me $400 of territorial scrip for my work, and this scrip was worth at that time about twenty-five cents on the dollar in gold. I eventually received a gold draft in St. Louis for $116 for the scrip, and I cashed the draft in St. Louis in 1865 at $1.60 for greenbacks.[5]

Late in the fall of 1864 the mines at Helena were discovered, and when the legislature adjourned at Bannack, a large portion of the members headed at once for the new Eldorado, my law partners being among the number, and I never saw either of them afterwards. During the spring and summer of 1865, about one half of the inhabitants of Virginia City left for Helena, and by fall the other half was expecting to go the next spring.

It was in the early part of 1865 that what is known as the "bread riots" occurred in Virginia City. During the winter months mining was practically suspended. Owing to the heavy snow on the mountain ranges, supply trains were barred out and provisions, especially flour, began to get at a low ebb. In February a demonstration was made by some persons against the only dealers in the town who had flour in any considerable quantity, but when they looked into the gun barrels that were arranged behind a barricade of flour sacks, they concluded that they were not as hungry as they thought they were, and dispersed. In April, after about all the flour in the country had been used up and the idle laborers had become hungrier than before, another demonstration was made,

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[5] The *History of Montana, 1739-1885* . . . (Chicago: Warner, Beers & Company, 1885), p. 320, confirms that "Harry" Burns received $400 for preparing the laws adopted in 1864. This volume also states that an H. Burns was among the first group of lawyers admitted to the Montana bar in December, 1864. *Ibid.*, p. 321.

to which opposition was not offered. The raiders visited all dealers and confiscated all flour found in excess of one one-hundred-pound sack, and allowed a fixed price for the flour taken, the flour being carried to a designated building and a limited amount sold to each applicant at the price fixed by the confiscators. Prior to this time the price of flour had soared skyward, one hundred pounds selling as high as $1.00 per pound, and there came a time when none could be purchased at any price. Yet no one suffered with hunger, as the hominy, beans and other food held out, and besides many persons had flour secreted. The writer never ate a meal without plenty of bread. The snows melted and supplies arrived before any one reached starvation point.

My first employment after arriving at Virginia City was shoveling gravel in the mines, but finding the work a little too strenuous I threw up my job at the end of two days and received $12 in gold dust for my work. I next engaged with a carpenter who was manufacturing sluice boxes for the miners, this work, owing to my early training, being much more to my liking. For this work I received $7.00 a day in the currency of the country, viz., gold dust. After a few weeks work I resigned this position and turned my attention to hunting up some members of the legal fraternity which resulted in the formation of a partnership in the practice of law, as before stated. Then I clerked in a store for several months. I remained in Virginia City until September 9, 1865, when I left for "the States."

There was a freight train of empty wagons going to St. Joseph, Missouri, and for a stipulated price passengers were taken, having their bedding, provisions, and cooking utensils carried, and passengers could either ride in the wagons or provide themselves with a pony and ride, paying for having their belongings hauled. I preferred the latter arrangement. There were something like three hundred persons in the train, there being forty wagons. We left Virginia City on a bright,

sunshiny morning but were overtaken by a snowstorm in the afternoon, and having to make our beds down on the snow the first night out was rather a rough introduction for our trip. We got out of the snow belt, however, the next afternoon and it was about two weeks before we encountered another snowstorm. The train traveled about twenty-five miles a day, camping at noon and also at night. It was a dreary, tiresome and monotonous trip and on reaching a point sixty miles north of Denver, I concluded to leave the train, go to Denver, and then take passage by stagecoach for Atchison, Kansas, the place that I started from in March, 1864. I had traveled with the train about one thousand miles, it requiring about forty days for the trip. Bidding goodbye to all friends in the train I put my belongings with myself on my pony and struck out for Denver. I stopped one night on the way, and reached Denver the second evening. On reaching the first settlements in Colorado some things that were formerly very common and familiar seemed quite a curiosity. I had not seen a live hog for more than a year and a half and the first one I saw in Colorado seemed to bring me nearer home and civilization. On reaching Denver I went to a hotel, had a separate room, a real bed, and sat down to a table on a chair to eat, something that had not occurred since leaving Salt Lake City in April, 1864.

Denver at this time—October, 1865—was a straggling town of three or four thousand people. I had to remain there five or six days before I could secure a seat in the stagecoach. In the meantime I sold my pony and saddle for $75. The fare by coach from Denver to Atchison was $175, having doubled since I went out in March, 1864. One thing that I had on my mind during the trip from Virginia City to St. Louis was that some merchants in Virginia City in whose employ I had been for several months entrusted me with $1,000 in gold dust to be delivered to a merchant in St. Louis. That much dust is too heavy to carry about ones person with comfort. While

traveling with the freight train I put it in the bottom of my flour sack; on reaching Denver I had it put in the hotel safe; and while traveling in the stagecoach I had to put it under the seat. It was a constant care and anxiety until I delivered it to the proper person in St. Louis. I remained in St. Louis a few days, bought me some clothes, the first I had purchased since starting for the gold fields, took train for Washington, Indiana, secured a private conveyance to Bloomfield and arrived at my old home on the last day of October, 1865.

Upon my return to Bloomfield I engaged in the practice of law and managed to secure enough in fees to supply my simple wants. In the fall of 1866 the western fever again struck me and I went to Omaha with the intention of locating there if the indications seemed favorable. I had two or three hundred dollars, which constituted all my worldly fortune. On arriving at Omaha I found all the avenues of business and employment overcrowded. I met the brother of a lawyer of Bloomington, Indiana, whom I knew, and he did not give me a very favorable impression as to the outlook for the future. The winter was just setting in, the Missouri River was liable to be closed by ice at any time, and the means of transportation cut off. There were no railroads to the east then. The construction of the Union Pacific Railroad had been commenced only the year before and there was about fifty miles in operation. The prospect was so discouraging for moneyless people that I returned to Bloomfield and took up my old life.

In the summer of 1868 I concluded to become a candidate for the nomination on the Democratic ticket for judge of the common pleas court. Since the district was composed of the same counties as when I had served as prosecutor for the court, I had a considerable acquaintance in each county. The convention was held at Terre Haute at the same time as

the convention to nominate the Congressional candidate. There being a candidate for judge from each county in the district, the contest was quite exciting and prolonged, but on the fifty-third ballot I secured the nomination through the persistency of some loyal friends. The district being safely Democratic, I was easily elected. It was a presidential year, General Grant being the Republican candidate while Seymour of New York was the standard bearer for the Democrats. In 1872 I was nominated for the same office and re-elected, but in March, 1873, the court was abolished by an act of the legislature and my term of office ended. When the court was abolished new circuit courts were created, a new circuit being made out of Morgan, Owen, and Greene counties, and there being a vacancy in the office of prosecuting attorney for the circuit I was appointed by Governor Hendricks to fill the vacancy and served until a successor was elected in 1874.

In March, 1870, I was married to Mary Constance Smydth, daughter of Dr. W. C. Smydth of Worthington, Indiana. The Indianapolis and Vincennes Railroad had been completed but a short time before and was then running one through train a day each way, such trains being composed of both freight and passenger cars. My wife and I left Worthington on our wedding journey on the train for Indianapolis, arriving there several hours late at about 11:00 P. M. It was before the days of street cars and there being no buses or cabs about the station we were compelled to walk to the Bates House. Next day we went by railroad to Cincinnati where we remained for a day or two then took boat for Louisville, and after remaining there a short time returned to Indianapolis by train and then to Worthington, our entire trip occupying just a week. We went to Bloomfield and took board with "Aunt Mag" Stropes. Our first child was born in March, 1871, but died at birth. Lee Burns, our son, was born in the Stropes residence on April 19, 1872.

I continued in the practice of law at Bloomfield until

May, 1874, when with my wife and baby boy I moved to Indianapolis where I engaged in the practice of law. I was connected with the prosecuting attorney's office from November, 1874, to September, 1876. In the summer of 1876 my name was put on the Democratic ticket for judge of the Superior Court of Marion County, and in September, there being a vacancy on the bench by the resignation of Judge Newcomb, I was appointed by Governor Hendricks to fill the vacancy and served until after the election. My opponent, Daniel W. Howe, being elected, as were all of the Republicans on the ticket in Marion County at this election, I returned to the practice of law until the fall of 1877 when I removed to Vincennes, Indiana, and engaged in the same business there. It was at Vincennes that I began the work of editing the Revised Statutes of Indiana on which I was engaged for many years.

Harrison Burns.

The Recollections end when Harrison Burns had reached the age of forty-one. It is too bad that he did not continue his narrative, for there was still much to relate. His wife died on September 24, 1882. In the early 1880s he practiced law in Winamac, Indiana, and in 1885 he went west again, this time to New Mexico as an assistant to George W. Julian, who had been appointed surveyor general of that territory. Here Harrison Burns aided in breaking up land-grant frauds and settling Mexican and Spanish land claims. Preserved among his papers are licenses to practice law in the Territory of New Mexico and El Paso County, Texas.

After moving to Vincennes in 1877 Harrison Burns had prepared an index to the Indiana Court Reports which was published in 1878. This was revised in 1882 and published by R. Clarke of Cincinnati under the title An Index or Abbreviated Digest of the Supreme Court Reports of the State of Indiana from the 1st Blackford to 77th Indiana, Inclusive. *A second volume, covering the Indiana Reports from Volume 78 through Volume 100 was published by the Bobbs-Merrill Company of Indianapolis in 1885. In*

1879 Harrison Burns had prepared and published a digest of Indiana railroad law and decisions. In 1896 he published his annotated code of Missouri, which recalls the Montana code which he had prepared in 1865.

In 1890 Harrison Burns began the task to which he would devote most of his time from then. Invited by the Bobbs-Merrill Company to make a revision of Indiana statutes, he moved back to Indianapolis and in 1894 the first edition of Burns' Annotated Indiana Statutes *(3 volumes) appeared. Thereafter he continued the preparation of successive revisions, the fifth complete revision being published just before his death. Revisions are still published by the Bobbs-Merrill Company under the title* Burns' Annotated Indiana Statutes.

In 1919 the Indiana historian Jacob Piatt Dunn wrote that "it is safe to say that the works of Judge Burns are quoted more often than those of any other Indiana author, for the reason that for a quarter of a century his Annotated Statutes of Indiana have been used almost exclusively . . . and without them it is impossible to transact legal business." At his death, which occurred on January 7, 1926, William C. Bobbs, of the Bobbs-Merrill Company, said that "only the lawyers of the state can have any appreciation of the great service which Judge Harrison Burns has rendered to all the people of the state in his Burns' Annotated Statutes. . . . He was a man of unwearying industry, large legal talent and truly consecrated to the work his hands found to do. With all this he has the becoming grace of unassumed modesty."

JAMES BURNS' RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY MADISON AND JEFFERSON COUNTY

The following is from an interview with James Burns, grandfather of Harrison Burns, published in the Madison Daily Courier, *December 6, 1873, and reprinted in Grace Vawter Bicknell,* The Vawter Family in America *(Indianapolis: Hollenbeck Press, 1905), pp. 387-92.*

ONE OF the oldest and most intelligent of our early settlers is living on Second Street, in the extreme western part of the city [of Madison, Indiana]. It is old James Burns, the father of the ex-Mayor Miles S. Burns. Mr. Burns was born in Loudon county, Virginia, near Alexandria, in 1786. He moved to Kentucky, traveling in a wagon, in the year 1794. Mason and Bracken counties were his stopping places until 1806, when, accompanied by a young wife he had lately married, he removed again into Ohio. In December, 1806, Burns entered Fort Washington for the first time. The fort and surrounding village had not yet received its present name—Cincinnati. . . . The houses were few and scattered here and there in the woods and clearing. Mr. Burns rented a farm and lived on it. . . .

Burns came to Madison in 1814, the Indians being then at war with the settlers. James Hartsock, John Burns and James Burns together purchased a boat at Cincinnati in which to bring themselves, and families and household possessions

to Madison. The boat was about one hundred feet long and roofed over. Three days were occupied in floating down to Madison. We landed, says Mr. Burns, opposite the big frame house that old John McIntire put up. . . . Main street at that time—1814—was the only street in town. Main Cross was laid out only a little way down towards Mulberry. A person had to drive around logs and trees to go anywhere. The timber was cut down to make a show but was not cut up or hauled away. There were eight or ten families in town, no more. The bottom was almost entirely covered with woods, only a little spot for houses.

Burnett's public house stood on Main Cross, close to where the old Indiana bank is now. On Main street was John Booth's tavern, a hewed log house on the east side of Main, below our Court House. A man named Wilson had a cabinet shop near the tavern. Col. [John] Paul lived in a brick house near the river bank, the only brick house in town then. Three or four lawyers were boarding with him, William Hendricks, Christopher Harrison, the government surveyors, and others. . . . Basil Bentley, the first sheriff of the county, also boarded with Col. Paul. I took dinner shortly after I came to town with Col. Paul and saw them all. Old Wagner, Ike Wagner's father, had a blacksmith shop between [present] Main and Mulberry, on High Street. John McIntire kept a dry goods store in his big frame house. Col. Paul had a mill back and above the present burying ground on Crooked Creek. The mill was up and had just got to grinding corn when I came. It was on the bank of Crooked Creek and was run by water power. The mill was a frame building and was fixed to make flour about 1816.

Dawson Blackmore lived on the corner of High and Walnut, in a one-story hewed log house. He had three sons and two daughters. Dawson Blackmore, Jr., was the first white male child born in Madison. He was a baby when we came. Betty Strickland, a daughter of Judge Strickland, who lived

beyond Blackmore's on Walnut street, was the first girl baby born about here. The Vawters were here and a few others besides when our party landed.

As we went up town from the boat we found everybody sitting around watching for Indians, afraid to go out of the house almost. A man named Jim Moore invited us to his house to stay a few days, and we went. After getting our families at Moore's, Hartsock and myself took our guns and went to Wirt, then a fort or blockhouse. We passed the blockhouse at old James Edwards' mill on Clifty creek. When we got out to the other blockhouse on Harbert's creek the people ran out and closed the gate, thinking we were Indians. They made us stand off and holler a good deal before they let us in. After the gate was opened they were standing staring and gaping to see whether we were true or not. I examined the land that I had bought that day and the next morning we got our horses and returned to Madison.

I then hired a team and hauled out two or three loads of furniture and things. Next we sold the boat to John and Jim Cowden. Our three families moved out to Harbert's blockhouse together. The first night we camped by a big log fire near to the old blockhouse. We located on Harbert's creek, on the site of the village of Wirt, six miles from Madison.

Five families were living in the blockhouse at this time; our party added three more . . . There was William Harbert, the first settler after whom the creek took its name . . ., Daniel Hickman, John Brock, Samuel Chasteen, Wm. West and their families. We all lived in the blockhouse and were in continual fear of the Indians. Every night we kept guard, and Judge [Williamson] Dunn passed once or twice every week with his Rangers. The Indians came in sight frequently threatening us. . . . The blockhouse was a square inclosing about one half an acre. In each of the four corners were log houses built unusually strong. The upper part hung over on the outside to prevent the Indians climbing up on the roof, and

all the sides were pierced with holes to fire through. There were other houses close up to the picket walls which served to strengthen the pickets. The picket was a fence of high heavy posts driven into the ground and sharpened on the ends. There was a gate on the north side of the fort, and one on the east. Inside the fort was a hollow square, all the houses being built close up to the walls.

The families that lived there had built cabins on their land when they first made the settlement, all of them from a half mile to three or four miles distant from Harbert's. When the Indians came about they were afraid to stay separated and so far from each other; so the blockhouse was built. The location was a first rate one. It was on the high bank just south of the creek. Then the land on the east and west side sloped down a little lower than where the fort was. A fine large spring was near the fort too. . . .

In those days we all dressed in buckskin breeches and hunting skirts. We never went out without our guns ready for an encounter with the Indians or wild animals. The woods were so full of game that the Rangers got all they had to eat out of them. . . .

This country belonged to old Captain White-eyes and his brood. White-eyes pretended to be a big chief and friendly to the whites, but there was no dependence in him. I saw him many a time. He was a bold looking old jockey, rather sassy, about thirty years old and not short of six feet in height. He wore the Indian garb, breech clout, leggins, and moccasins, with a blanket thrown over his shoulders. His leggins were of dark blue or black woolen cloth, pretty fine too. Indians were pertickler about cloth; they knew what was good and wouldn't buy if it wasn't. His hair was long and black and had buzzard quills stuck around in it. He always carried a gun and a tomahawk. His tomahawk was made with a pipe in the pole. He was the biggest Indian in the tribe, The

Pottawattamies.[1] The tribe came from out on the Wabash. There was well onto a hundred with White-eyes. They had a camp on Marble Creek, close to Hillis' blockhouse. It was in Lancaster township on Stout's farm. The camp was on a little knoll, a very pretty place. All about it the bark was pulled off the trees and set on end for shelter. Trees were peeled as high as they [the Indians] could reach and for a good bit around as they had about fifteen wigwams.

Indians wouldn't go into a house and sit down on a chair to eat from a table. They'd get down on their knees around the table and take things off the plates with their hands. I've seen Indians eating meat off one end of a chunk and a dog biting and chewing at the other. They thought as much of their dogs as they did of themselves. In the logs and stumps about the camp you'd see little holes hollowed out where they put their corn and pounded it with tomahawks. They had a good many ponies which they used in packing their things from place to place. Every man carried his rifle and hunting gear. Old White-eyes rode generally. The squaws wrapped a lot of stuff, sometimes a bushel or two of corn, in a blanket and swung it on their backs, having the ends tied and pressing against their foreheads. They were accustomed to come here to trade and never got away without getting pretty well melted with liquor. . . . The Indians were pretty good marksmen. They shot with rifle and bow and arrow.

Wirt was laid out by Col. [Copeland P. J.] Arion, James Vawter and myself. I proposed Wyandotte as the name of the place. Col. Arion suggested Wirt, after William Wirt of Virginia, and so it got that name. The Baptists (Iron Jackets)

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[1] White Eyes was a chief of the Delaware, not the Potawatomi. He signed the treaty of 1805 by which his tribe and the Potawatomi, Miami, Eel River, and Wea ceded their claim to the area around Madison to the United States.

organized a church at Wirt, in February, 1818. The meeting was held in the log school-house. The members were Wm. West and wife, Wm. Harbert and wife, John Burns and wife, James Burns and wife, Robert Harbert a single man, a young woman named Rebecca Marshall, John Stevens, Wilson Moncrief, Abner Moncrief, James Harbert, Thomas Glover, and Rachael Johnson. Daniel Stogsdill, the preacher, was from Pulaski Co., Ky. Church was held in the school-house for nine years. Then a little brick house was built. The present church is almost exactly on the site of the first one, just a little distance east of the old one. The first baptism recorded by the church was in June, 1825. The first school-house was built pretty near the present church. It was started in 1819. The teacher was a Scotchman, named Carmichael, who boarded at my house. The first mill-dam ever built on Big Creek was made by James Hays. It was in Lancaster township, and is now the property of John B. Craft. It was formerly owned by Horace Byfield. The dam is there yet; I had my wheat and corn ground there for three or four years.

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